

THE DIAL

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PSYCHOLOGY AND POLITICS

BY BERTRAND RUSSELL

I WANT to discuss in this article the kind of effects which psychology may, before long, come to have upon politics. I propose to speak both of the good effects that are possible, and of the bad effects that are probable.

Political opinions are not based upon reason. Even so technical a matter as the resumption of the gold standard was determined mainly by sentiment, and according to the psycho-analysts, the sentiment in question is one which cannot be mentioned in polite society. Now the sentiments of an adult are compounded of a kernel of instinct surrounded by a vast husk of education. One way in which education works is through influencing imagination. Everybody wants to see himself as a fine fellow, and therefore both his efforts and his delusions are influenced by what he considers the best possible in the way of achievement. I think the study of psychology may alter our conception of a "fine fellow"; if so, obviously its effect upon politics will be profound. I doubt whether any one who had learnt modern psychology in youth could be quite like the late Lord Curzon or the present Bishop of London.

With regard to any science, there are two kinds of effects which it may have. On the one hand, experts may make inventions or discoveries which can be utilized by the holders of power. On the other hand, the science may influence imagination, and so alter people's analogies and expectations. There is, strictly speaking, a third kind of effect, namely a change in manner of life with all its consequences. In the case of physical science, all three classes of effects are, by this time, clearly developed. The first is illustrated

by aeroplanes, the second by the mechanistic outlook on life, the third by the substitution, in a large part of the population, of industry and urban life for agriculture and the country. In the case of psychology, we still have to depend upon prophecy as regards most of its effects. Prophecy is always rash, but is more so as regards effects of the first and third kinds than as regards those which depend upon a change of imaginative outlook. I shall, therefore, speak first and chiefly about effects of this kind.

A few words about other periods of history may help to give the atmosphere. In the Middle Ages, every political question was determined by theological arguments, which took the form of analogies. The dominant controversy was between the Pope and the Emperor: it became recognized that the Pope was the Sun and the Emperor was the Moon, so the Pope won. It would be a mistake to argue that the Pope won because he had better armies; he owed his armies to the persuasive power of the Sun-and-Moon analogy, as set forth by Franciscan friars acting as recruiting sergeants. This is the kind of thing that really moves masses of men and decides important events. In the present age, some people think society is a machine and some think it is a tree. The former are Fascisti, imperialists, industrialists, Bolsheviks; the latter constitutionalists, agrarians, or pacifists. The argument is just as absurd as that of the Guelfs and Ghibellines, since society is in fact neither a machine nor a tree.

With the renaissance, we come to a new influence, the influence of literature, especially classical literature. This continues to our own day, more particularly among those who go to the public schools and the older universities. When Professor Gilbert Murray has to make up his mind on a political question, one feels that his first reaction is to ask himself, "What would Euripides have said about it?" But this outlook is no longer dominant in the world. It was dominant in the renaissance, and in the eighteenth century, down to and including the French Revolution. Revolutionary orators constantly appealed to shining examples of Roman virtue, and liked to conceive themselves in togas. Books such as Montesquieu and Rousseau had an influence far surpassing what any book can have now. One may say that the American Constitution is what Montesquieu imagined the British Constitution to be. I

am not enough of a jurist to trace the influence which admiration of Rome exercised upon the Code Napoléon.

With the industrial revolution, we pass to a new era—the era of physics. Men of science, especially Galileo and Newton, had prepared the way for this era, but what brought it to birth was the embodiment of science in economic technique. A machine is a very peculiar object: it works according to known scientific laws (otherwise it would not be constructed) for a definite purpose lying outside itself, and having to do with man, usually with man's physical life. Its relation to man is exactly that which the world had to God in the Calvinist theology; perhaps that is why industrialism was invented by Protestants, and by non-conformists rather than anglicans. The machine-analogy has had a profound effect upon our thought. We speak of a "mechanical" view of the world, a "mechanical" explanation, and so on, meaning, nominally, an explanation in terms of physical laws, but introducing, perhaps unconsciously, the teleological aspect of a machine, namely, its devotion to an end outside itself. So, if society is a machine, we think that it has a purpose of an external sort. We are no longer content to say that it exists for the glory of God, but it is easy to find synonyms for God, such as: the Bank of England, the British Empire, the Standard Oil Company, the Communist Party, et cetera. Our wars are conflicts between these synonyms—it is the mediaeval sun-and-moon business over again.

The power of physics has been due to the fact that it is a very definite science, which has profoundly altered daily life. But this alteration has proceeded by operating on the environment, not on man himself. Given a science equally definite, and capable of altering man directly, physics would be put in the shade. This is what psychology may become. Until recent times, psychology was unimportant philosophical verbiage—the academic stuff that I learnt in youth was not worth learning. But now there are two ways of approaching psychology which are obviously important: one that of the physiologists, the other that of psycho-analysis. As the results in these two directions become more definite and more certain, it is clear that psychology will increasingly dominate men's outlook.

Let us take Education as a case in point. In old days, the

received view was that education should begin at about eight years old, with the learning of Latin declensions; what happened before that was regarded as unimportant. This view, in essence, seems to be still dominant in the Labour Party, which, when in office, took much more interest in improving education after fourteen than in providing nursery schools for infants. With concentration on late education there goes a certain pessimism as to its powers: it is thought that all it can really do is to fit a man for earning a living. But one finds that the scientific tendency is to attribute far more power to education than was formerly done, only it must begin very early. Psycho-analysts would begin at birth; biologists would begin even sooner. You can educate a fish to have one eye in the middle, instead of two eyes, one on either side (Jennings, *Prometheus*, page 60). But to do this you have to begin long before the fish is born. So far, there are difficulties in the way of pre-natal mammalian education, but probably they will be overcome.

But, you will say, you are using "education" in a very funny sense. What is there in common between distorting a fish and teaching a boy Latin Grammar? I must say they seem to me very similar: both are wanton injuries inflicted for the pleasure of the experimenter. However, this would perhaps hardly do as a definition of education. The essence of education is that it is a change (other than death) effected in an organism to satisfy the desires of the operator. Of course the operator says that his desire is to improve the pupil, but this statement does not represent any objectively verifiable fact.

Now there are many ways of altering an organism. You may change its anatomy, as in the fish that has lost an eye, or the man that has lost an appendix. You may alter its metabolism, for instance by drugs. You may alter its habits by creating associations. Ordinary instruction is a particular case of this last. Now everything in education, with the exception of instruction, is easier when the organism is very young, because then it is malleable. In human beings, the important time for education is from conception to the end of the fourth year. But, as I said before, pre-natal education is not yet possible, though it probably will be before the end of this century.

There are two principal methods of early education: one is by chemicals, the other by suggestion. When I say "chemicals,"

perhaps I shall be thought unduly materialistic. But no one would have thought so if I had said, "of course a careful mother will provide the infant with the most wholesome diet available," which is only a longer way of saying the same thing. However, I am concerned with possibilities that are more or less sensational. It may be found that the addition of suitable drugs to the diet, or the injection of the right substances into the blood, will increase intelligence or alter the emotional nature. Everyone knows of the connexion of idiocy with lack of iodine. Perhaps we shall find that intelligent men are those who, in infancy, got small quantities of some rare compound accidentally in their diet, owing to lack of cleanliness in the pots and pans. Or perhaps the mother's diet during pregnancy will turn out to be the decisive factor. I know nothing about this whole subject; I merely observe that we know much more about the education of salamanders than about that of human beings, chiefly because we do not imagine that salamanders have souls.

The psychological side of early education cannot well begin before birth, because it is chiefly concerned with habit-formation, and habits acquired before birth are useless afterwards, for the most part. But I think there is no doubt of the enormous influence of the early years in forming character. There is a certain opposition, to my mind quite unnecessary, between those who believe in dealing with the mind through the body, and those who believe in dealing with it directly. The old-fashioned medical man, though an earnest Christian, tends to be a materialist; he thinks that mental states have physical causes, and should be cured by removing those causes. The psycho-analyst, on the contrary, always seeks for psychological causes, and tries to operate upon them. This whole thing hangs together with the mind-and-matter dualism, which I regard as a mistake. Sometimes it is easier to discover the sort of antecedent we call physical; sometimes the sort we call psychological is easier to discover. But I should suppose that both always exist, and that it is rational to operate through the one most easily discoverable in the particular case. There is no inconsistency in treating one case by administering iodine, and another by curing a phobia.

When we try to take a psychological view of politics, it is natural to begin by looking for the fundamental impulses of ordinary human beings, and the ways in which they can be developed

by the environment. The orthodox economists of a hundred years ago thought that acquisitiveness was the only motive the politician need take account of; this view was adopted by Marx, and formed the basis of his economic interpretation of history. It derives naturally from physics and industrialism: it is the outcome of the imaginative domination of physics in our time. It is now held by capitalists and communists, and by all respectable persons, such as *The Times* and the magistrates, both of whom express utter amazement when young women sacrifice their earnings to marry men on the dole. The received view is that happiness is proportional to income, and that a rich old maid must be happier than a poor married woman. In order to make this true, we do all we can to inflict misery upon the latter.

As against orthodoxy and Marxianism, the psycho-analysts say that the one fundamental human impulse is sex. Acquisitiveness, they say, is a morbid development of a certain sexual perversion. It is obvious that people who believe this will act quite differently from people who take the economic view. Everybody except certain pathological cases wishes to be happy, but most people accept some current theory as to what constitutes happiness. If people think wealth constitutes happiness, they will not act as they will if they think sex the essential thing. I do not think either view quite true, but I certainly think the latter the less harmful. What does emerge is the importance of a right theory as to what constitutes happiness. In such important acts as choosing a career, a man is greatly influenced by theory. If a wrong theory prevails, successful men will be unhappy, but will not know why. This fills them with rage, which leads them to desire the slaughter of younger men, whom they envy unconsciously. Most modern politics, while nominally based on economics, is really due to rage caused by lack of instinctive satisfaction; and this lack, in turn, is largely due to false popular psychology.

I do not think that sex covers the ground. In politics, especially, sex is chiefly important when thwarted. In the war, elderly spinsters developed a ferocity partly attributable to their indignation with young men for having neglected them. They are still abnormally bellicose. I remember soon after the armistice crossing Saltash Bridge in the train, and seeing many battleships anchored

below. Two elderly spinsters in the carriage turned to each other and murmured: "Isn't it sad to see them all lying idle?" But sex satisfied ceases to influence politics much. I should say that both hunger and thirst count for more politically. Parenthood is immensely important, because of the importance of the family; Rivers even suggested that it is the source of private property. But parenthood must not be confounded with sex.

In addition to the impulses which serve for the preservation and propagation of life, there are others concerned with what may be called Glory: love of power, vanity, and rivalry. These obviously play a very great part in politics. If politics is ever to allow of a tolerable life, these glory-impulses must be tamed and taught to take no more than their proper place.

Our fundamental impulses are neither good nor bad: they are ethically neutral. Education should aim at making them take forms that are good. The old method, still beloved by Christians, was to thwart instinct; the new method is to train it. Take love of power: it is useless to preach Christian humility, which merely makes the impulse take hypocritical forms. What you have to do is to provide beneficent outlets for it. The original native impulse can be satisfied in a thousand ways—oppression, politics, business, art, science, all satisfy it when successfully practised. A man will choose the outlet for his love of power that corresponds with his skill; according to the type of skill given him in youth, he will choose one occupation or another. The purpose of our public schools is to teach the technique of oppression and no other; consequently they produce men who take up the white man's burden. But if these men could do science, many of them might prefer it. Of two activities which a man has mastered, he will generally prefer the more difficult: no chess player will play draughts. In this way, skill may be made to minister to virtue.

As another illustration, take Fear. Rivers enumerates four kinds of reaction to danger, each appropriate in certain circumstances:

- I. Fear and Flight.
- II. Rage and Fight.
- III. Manipulative activity.
- IV. Paralysis.

It is obvious that the third is the best, but it requires the appropriate type of skill. The second is the one praised by militarists, schoolmasters, bishops, et cetera, under the name of "courage." Every governing class aims at producing it in its own members, and producing fear and flight in the subject population. So women were, until our own times, carefully trained to be timorous. And one finds still in Labour an inferiority complex, taking the form of snobbery and social submissiveness.

It is greatly to be feared that psychology will place new weapons in the hands of the holders of power. They will be able to train timidity and docility, and make the mass of men more and more like domestic animals. When I speak of the holders of power, I do not mean only the capitalists—I include all officials, even those of trade-unions and Labour Parties. Every official, every man in a position of authority, wants his followers to be tame: he is indignant if they insist on having their own ideas as to what constitutes their happiness, instead of being grateful for what he is good enough to provide. In the past, the hereditary principle ensured that many of the governing class should be lazy and incompetent, which gave the others a chance. But if the governing class is to be recruited from the most energetic in each generation, who are to rise by their own efforts, the outlook for ordinary mortals is very black. It is hard to see how, in such a world, anybody can champion the rights of the lazy, i.e., of those who do not want to interfere with other people. It seems that quiet people will have to learn fearlessness and energy in youth if they are to have any chance in a world where all power is the reward of hustling. Perhaps democracy is a passing phase; if so, psychology will serve to rivet the chains on the serfs. This makes it important to secure democracy before the technique of oppression has been perfected.

Reverting to the threefold effects of a science which I enumerated at the beginning, it is clear that we cannot guess what use the holders of power will make of psychology, until we know what sort of government we are to have. Psychology, like every other science, will place new weapons in the hands of the authorities, notably the weapons of education and propaganda, both of which may, by a more finished psychological technique, be brought to the point where they will be practically irresistible. If the

holders of power desire peace, they will be able to produce a pacific population; if war, a bellicose population. If they desire to generate intelligence, they will get it; if stupidity, they will get that. On this head, therefore, prophecy is quite impossible.

As to the effect of psychology upon the imagination, that will probably be of two opposite kinds. On the one hand, there will be a wider acceptance of determinism. Most men now feel uncomfortable about prayers for rain, because of meteorology; but they are not so uncomfortable about prayers for a good heart. If the causes of a good heart were as well known as the causes of rain, this difference would cease. A man who prayed for a good heart instead of calling in the doctor to rid him of bad desires would be branded as a hypocrite, if everybody could become a saint by paying a few guineas to a Harley Street specialist. With the increase of determinism would go, probably, a lessening of effort and a general increase of moral laziness—not that such an effect would be logical. I cannot say whether this would be a gain or a loss, as I do not know whether more good or harm comes from moral effort combined with faulty psychology. On the other hand, there would be an emancipation from materialism, both metaphysical and ethical; emotions would be thought more important if they formed the subject-matter of a generally recognized and practically efficacious science. This effect, I think, would be wholly good, since it would remove the erroneous notions now prevalent as to what constitutes happiness.

As to the possible effect of psychology in altering our manner of life through discoveries and inventions, I do not venture upon any forecast, as I cannot see any reason for expecting one sort of effect rather than another. For example: it may be that the most important effect will be to teach negroes to fight as well as white men, without acquiring any other new merits. Or, conversely, psychology may be used to induce negroes to practice birth-control. These two possibilities would produce very different worlds, and there is no way of guessing whether one or the other or neither will be realized.

Finally: the great practical importance of psychology will come in giving ordinary men and women a more just conception of what constitutes human happiness. If people were genuinely happy,

they would not be filled with envy, rage, and destructiveness. Apart from the necessities of life, freedom for sex and parenthood is what is most needed—at least as much in the middle class as among wage-earners. It would be easy, with our present knowledge, to make instinctive happiness almost universal, if we were not thwarted by the malevolent passions of those who have missed happiness and do not want any one else to get it. And if happiness were common, it would preserve itself, because appeals to hatred and fear, which now constitute almost the whole of politics, would fall flat. But if psychological knowledge is wielded by an aristocracy, it will prolong and intensify all the old evils. The world is full of knowledge of all sorts that might bring such happiness as has never existed since man first emerged, but old maladjustments, greed, envy, and religious cruelty, stand in the way. I do not know what the outcome will be, but I think it will be either better or worse than anything the human race has yet known.

IN WHICH THE FINGERS OF THE NIGHT
WIND ARE MADE TO CALL

Martha's Vineyard Island

BY SCOFIELD THAYER

I think it is the ragged sailors
Which crowd against the wall,
I think it is their odd, blue waking
Has made those fingers call.

They have enmeshed his vagrant going.
More potent than the stars
From a minute and dank earth-corner
They have erected bars.

In him who was a vacant faring
Athwart a vacant world
They have emplanted Earth's own sorrow,
And wakefully encurled.

There is no sorrow in the heavens,
They have it honest there;
It is the worm and corpse corrupted
Earth which wrought this air.

It is her heart, made rich with vileness,
Which wails and mounts the wind,
It is her heart which leaning backwards
Puts fingers on my blind.

The stars are impotent to touch me.
The winds of God are winds.
It is the fibrous mesh of gardens
Which reaches me, and binds.

THE FINGERS OF THE NIGHT WIND

It is from flowers which grow so starlike,
And yet grow more than stars,
It is from gardens which are heavenly,
And yet are rangèd scars;

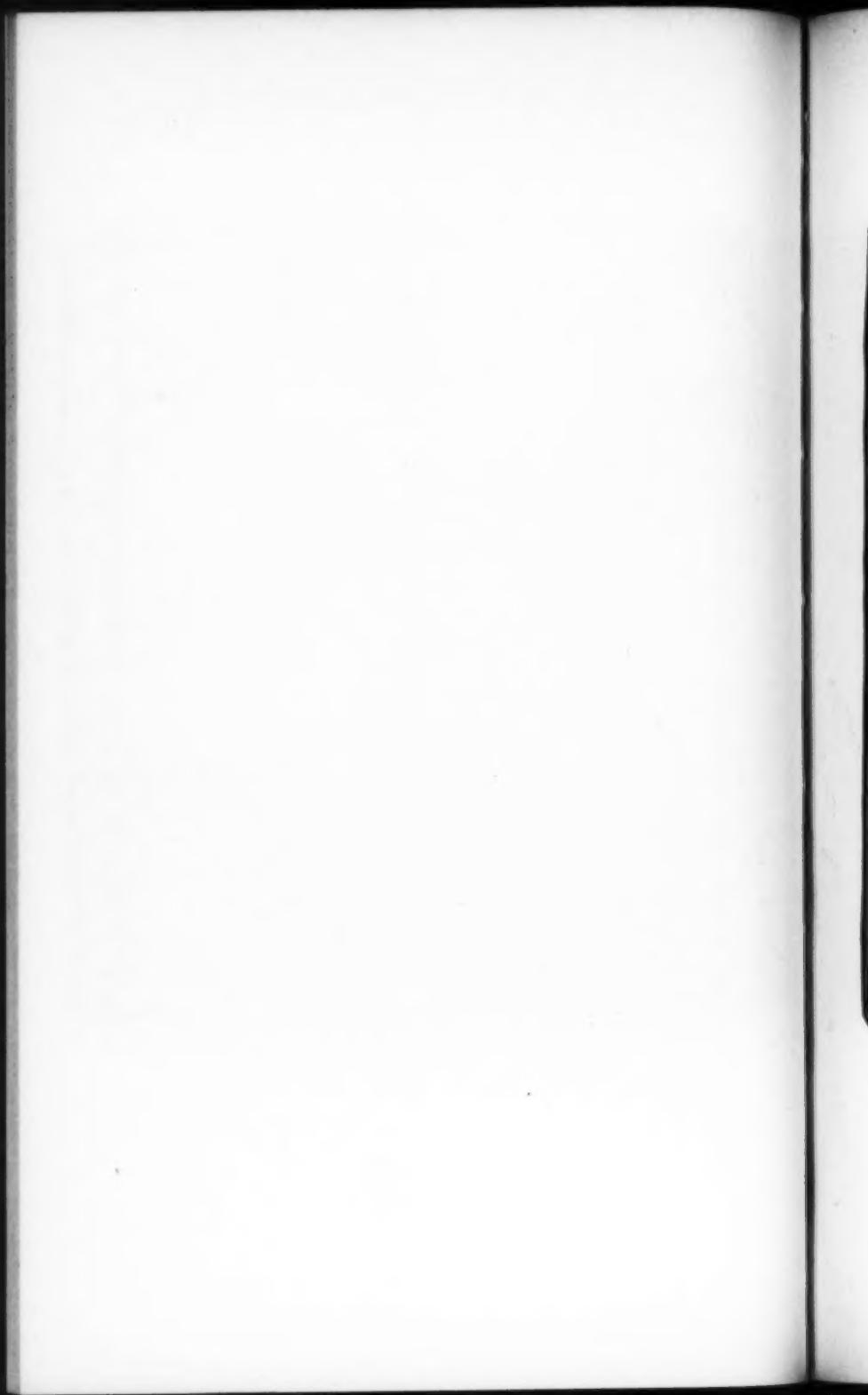
It is from the impetuous cryings
Of Dust that has no rest,
It is from salt-mixt Mould, and Living,
There pries this winding quest:

It is the drowned which clamour loudly
And speak a random mind;
It is the Masterful Hearts of Ship's-men
Which have Impressed the Wind.

It is the worms which whistle wanly
And turn the air unkind;
It is the Lawless Dust of Seamen
Which has so used the Wind.



BARNYARD: PENNSYLVANIA. BY WHARTON HARRIS ESHERICK





APRIL. BY WHARTON HARRIS ESHERICK

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SISTER OF HUNTERS

BY GLENWAY WESCOTT

ROSE HAMILTON came to Wisconsin in 1847 as a child of three. She grew up among bearded men, hunters and trappers. George, her eldest brother, could not read or write; Enoch had lost one arm in a saw-mill; a cousin named Tom Gore also made his home with them. The ironwoods around the large cabin smelled of skunk whose striped pelts, with the skins of mink and beaver, turned inside out on boards, swung from the lower limbs. The three men shot squirrels, rabbits, young coon, and deer for food, and hunted foxes and timber wolves for sport. They went by night to the trees where the passenger pigeons roosted, picked them off the branches like fruit, wrung their necks, and filled many dripping baskets. They said, "Pretty soon, smart fellows like those Towers'll spoil this country. Make a woman's country out of it, just like Kentucky. We're goin' to git out then, west." Fire-arms and pouches hung upon pegs, wet boots stood by the fire, and venison smoked inside the fire-place. Their grandmother, whom they called "the old woman," fingered her corn-cob pipe in one corner; she was stone-deaf and hated the men. Their mother grumbled; but indulged them as if they were sickly children; she said, "The world is a man's world, women might as well make up their minds to it."

Rose and her sister Alma walked four miles through the woods to attend school, stoning bushes where a fox or a badger had vanished, terrified of stags. The school-house occupied a clearing on one of the Indian trails; and two or three times a year the pupils were allowed to stand outdoors to watch a tribe of Pottawottamies pass. The ponies were unshod; their hoofs were split and spread apart, their hocks deformed by spavins; and their ears, full of burs, flapped with each stumbling step. Kettles in pairs, rude implements, and tent-poles lay across their withers. The round-headed babies, borne like copper images by squat women on foot, gave no sign of life though horse-flies crawled round their nostrils. A pack

of dogs followed, one grey bitch running as if it were a splash of quicksilver under the leaves. The men had formidable mouths, and many of their hard eyes were veiled by cataracts. They rode without saddles on folded blankets, the muscles of their bent knees lying flat on the bone like thongs of leather. Rose remembered how her grandfather had been killed in Kentucky: in the sugar-bush, stirring the maple sap which boiled over the iron rim of the kettle; when he looked up, he had seen two savages who sat in a tall tree, watching him; he had shot them, one after the other; their half-naked bodies had fallen in the underbrush; after that, other Indians had waited their chance, and one day had scalped him. Indians like these. . . . But these were harmless; why didn't they fight? Rose wanted to fight for them or against them, because they were male and emaciated, and looked neither to the right nor the left. Down the corridor of light branches and stiff trunks they vanished, leaving behind an odour of wild men, dogs, and dried meat.

Rose walked up and down the trail, hoping to meet them by herself. One afternoon men galloped from village to village with word that the Indians in Minnesota were on the war-path, burning and killing and coming south. She went to stay with a neighbour, Mrs Aaron Smith, who had six children and whose husband was absent. They watched for two nights with shotguns laid across their knees, the little ones tossing in two beds, the elder wide-awake with excitement. The mother trembled continually, but whispered to Rose the news of the community. They listened and clutched the oily guns, but could hear only the struggle of branches with wind and the moss dripping in the well. Rose was frightened when a child began to cry, or when dogs whined round a carcass in the forest, but she would not show it; for she felt like a man, defending the weak woman and her babies. Meanwhile, in the far north, tuberculous tribes were howling to keep up their courage; then all the ponies, spotted with sores, faltered, and they rode no further; it was the last raid in that part of the West. Rose liked Mrs Aaron Smith and was sorry to go home.

She and Alma played truant from school, creeping over the hill, careless of punishment, but eager to enjoy a holiday before they were caught. Their cousin, Tom Gore, was hoeing in the potato

patch; he shouted, "Get back to school, young hussies! Get back there!" and chased them and pelted them with clods. They fled all the way back, not stopping when they left him behind, panting with pleasant excitement.

When she was thirteen years old Rose had a mature woman's body, deep-breasted and awkward. Tom Gore tried to kiss her one day when they were alone, and ran after her. She climbed up an apple tree. He caught her ankle and threatened to tear her skirt, but she whipped him with a small branch until he went away. She complained to her brother George, and Tom Gore received a thrashing. After that he called her a tattle-tale whenever he dared, but seemed to bear no grudge.

In August and September the girls picked wild berries for the market. One morning Rose caught yellow and pink spiders to put in Tom Gore's bed, keeping them in her hat. They heard laughing voices and went in the direction from which they sounded: boys' voices at the swimming hole; they crept into a clump of elderberry bushes. Alma whispered, "It's wicked, it's wicked!" and Rose covered her mouth with one hand so she could not betray their presence. Alma hid her face and would not look.

Sumach dangled its leaves like parrot feathers in the round black pool. Shirts, trousers, and shoes lay on a mound of butternut roots and sod. A naked boy stood there, white and gaunt; he splashed in among the others. Rose wanted to be swimming with them; the sight of male bodies did not trouble her, who had been reared in a cabin of careless men; she was comparing their force and subtlety. There were seven: one sat cross-legged on a log which lay over a bed of cress; on the round chest of one, older than the others, red hair glistened in the spotted light. One was too lean, one was short and clumsy, one weak; and the strength of the strongest was common. Six climbed up on the bank and put on their clothes; under cover of their shouts, Alma, whose modesty had grown tedious, slipped away in the woods. When Rose looked at the one who was left, she no longer wanted to be swimming there, feeling instead an acute embarrassment; it was the third of the Towers, Leander. Alwyn, the youngest, lay in the grass, also watching his brother, with sad bright eyes. The others did not wait. Leander floated on his back, like amber in the water. He was two years

older than Rose, and she preferred him to all the rest. The blond curls washed in his eyes, and he laughed with a sound of little splashes of water lifted and falling. Resting on one elbow, Alwyn waited uneasily. Rose envied him because, by the accident of birth, he was Leander's playmate; they worked side by side in the fields, and slept in one bed. The bathers dressed, and ran down an aisle of poplars.

As she walked slowly back to the berry-patch, a fox crossed her path, like a dog whose pelt was on fire—she did not even throw stones at it. She found the basket of berries and her hat; the gold and rose spiders had returned to their webs, but she had forgotten them.

She grew tired of the life at home. She wanted to look like a lady, like young Mrs Henry Tower; and it was difficult to bathe and dress amid the gibes of her brothers, under Tom Gore's agitated eyes. She thought that short skirts made her resemble a boy who is too fat; so a yellow taffeta dress was made, with a hoop and row upon row of ruffles. She forced Alma to pierce her ears with a hatpin, and her grandmother gave her a pair of gold ear-rings she had brought from Kentucky. She put up her hair in a chignon and trained a damp curl over each ear. Her cheeks, which were rough and bright as a cinnamon rose, seemed brighter.

Then she took a school three miles from home. She was slow at books; the schools she herself had attended had been unruly; so each night she studied the exercise in the speller and the arithmetic problems which she would have to teach next day. She was not afraid of half-grown men, and understood tomboys; the school board congratulated her upon her discipline. The tall girl in yellow ruffles who returned to Hope's Corner at the end of the week was proud.

On Saturday nights Henry Tower held a singing school in the Hope's Corner school-house. He struck the key with a tuning fork and taught them to sing by the scale: "Do re mi fa so la ti do." All that family were singers; Henry led the men with a pure voice that sounded lonely among the rest, and his lovely wife Serena led the trebles. Alwyn still sang with the women—his voice frail and pointed, less like a voice than an instrument—sitting beside Serena, seeming to sing only for her and Leander. Rose also sang for them. She wanted nothing in the world, neither in the wilder-

ness she knew nor in the countries she would never know, but to be acceptable to that family, loved by that boy.

When the evening came to an end she said to him, "Will you take me home, Leander? I'm frightened to-night." He only blushed; but Henry had heard and he whispered, "Leander, behave like a gentleman." Serena pressed her hand and said, "I hear you're doing finely with your school." Alwyn followed them as if it were a matter of course, but in the dark she could touch Leander's arm, and the tips of her fingers tingled.

Soon the neighbours said they were sweethearts, and they were together wherever they went. A miracle took place: Leander seemed not to see that she was less beautiful than Serena. There were no caresses, but for the sister of hunters and trappers, love was a simple thing. It meant gentleness and courtesy, it meant permission to enjoy proudly his tireless grace, it meant forgetting that she was too heavy and too tall. Her failure to understand him moved her as nothing else could. And when that which passed her understanding was kind to her—she did not require kisses to feel a tumult like that of a swarm of wild bees over their honey.

They stood under a mountain ash in the autumn. He wore a corduroy jacket the colour of his hair and skin. He had grown a beard which did not hide the blush and the smile which took turns in his face. She knew that Alwyn was watching them, perched on a log fence; she did not care. The young tree drooped with its clusters of mature berries, like drops of rain suspended over their upturned faces, drops bright as blood, not human blood—the blood of angels. "It's a beauty," Leander said. Rose forgot that she existed; there were only two things in the world: the tree and Leander.

If she had been imaginative, if she had ever feared anything which was not a physical danger, she would have feared Alwyn. Staring at her, his eyes grew large, as a pair of tears swell when they are about to fall; and he bit his lips until they bled. One evening she thought it was love; another evening when he muttered, "Girls who pretend to be afraid of the dark," she knew it was hate. When Leander was not there he was friendly and timid. They met by accident in the woods and gathered mushrooms all one afternoon, and she taught him to recognize a rare variety, almost indistinguishable from others which are poisonous.

Then the Civil War began. Her brothers went quickly, well pleased with the adventure; John, Harrison, and Henry Tower enlisted. One night she stood with Leander by a gate; dreamily he said, but with a tone which was like decision in a dream, "I suppose I'd better go." Rose turned sick, she had not thought of that. She clenched her fists in hatred, he was so young, he was hers. . . . Then she realized a new thing, new for the child of stupid hunters: it was what Towers did, there were flags and ideas, quite separate from themselves, which they cared about, so much. . . . She would learn to care, she who wanted to be a Tower—it was time now. So she laid her fingers against his chest, and felt through the coarse flannel his breath going in and out in a miniature tide; and one word was almost impossible to pronounce: "Maybe," she said.

NOTE: Sister of Hunters is a portion of Mr Wescott's forthcoming book, entitled *The Grandmothers*.

EVENING WALK

BY GLADYS CAMPBELL

The sky was silent like a tongueless bell
Of glass, and following my feet the still
Half-circling waves slipped back with grains of stone.

The momentary beach I walked was gone.

I thought, "This is a place of ebb and flow.
Hot suns here leave a rosy afterglow
And two months more will pile this shore with snow."

The shadow of a bright gull crossed my hand.
The shadow of a bright gull crossed the sand.

AN AMERICAN SONNETEER

BY PAUL ROSENFELD

THE veritable elegant is as rare in our letters as the able sonneteer. And Donald Evans the Patagonian released in the quatorzain and in other set and freer forms a personal rhythm, jocundly dashing, reckless, and suave. It walks the Avenue, swinging through all the world, blandest, lightest, proudest of steppers. It is a peacock rhythm, alternately grandiose and nonchalant; sustained awhile in its loud important march, then capriciously, gracefully undercut; and marvellously spirited and exciting to gusto. This exhibition, dandified manner, marmoreal pose, has verve and fire. You may cart away the other dandies, the fat, disgruntled ones. This one, leave; for verve and fire make a music of dandidom.

He was a temperamental member of the Yankee tribe of Thomases in doubt of beauty. "Beauty," to this sport from the Puritanic stem, represented the state of faith known to the artists: release into life vaster than the personal; apprehension of changeless law through the individual adventure. "Could I enlist a Battalion of Irreproachables," he let the introduction to the war-time edition of his Sonnets from the Patagonian say, "whose uniform should be walking suit, top hat and pumps, and their only weapon an ebony stick, and sail to-morrow, we should march down Unter den Linden in a month, provided wrapped in our kerchiefs we carried the Gospel of Beauty, and a nonchalance in the knot of our cravats." That was his humorously affected fashion of affirming the miraculous power of the religious sense, the deep immutable impersonality toward which he groped but which eluded him in life. The positive makings were present. The rhythm of the Patagonian sonnets streams into the world at a brilliant elevation. Yet the feelings would not issue warmly. Perhaps we have to do with one of the unfortunate sensuous devils perpetually in trouble with themselves; aware of having sacrificed to perishable emotions; familiar from the cradle with a sense of guilt and of

damnation; prisoners to vanity's last and firmest shackles, the conviction of having failed of achieving what others had a right to expect and was owing themselves. Evans' beginning to an auto-portrait runs:

"Wistfully shimmering, shamelessly wise and weak,
He lives in pawn, pledging a battered name;
He loves his failures as one might love fame . . ."

In this condition of torment, conscious of serene regions and incapable of attaining them, sensitive feelings could not have the strength flowing from the conviction which comes from universality. Release was to be found only in the quasi-decorative use of the talents, in agreeable self-exhibition, in the dashing and nonchalant air of the fabled Bond Street walker absolved of all reproach through the faultless conduct of a "clouded" cane. Hence, the form of his poetry, the Patagonianism, the air of elegant hard-boiling, the reckless fondling of the superior grotesques of modern life: Igor Vyvian, the *heuetontimoroumenos*; the brilliant lady destructive in her hysterical self-indulgence and tragic mountainous mole-hills; and the gentleman who "polished snubs till they were regnant art." The machinery gave his impulses a unity. The flaunt of impassivity permitted him to visit the weak scenes of his life in complete superiority; to portray the compromitments of clever men, and the dangerous tricks of feminine *amour-propre* which made it up; and to give out his riches and "dance along the boulevard" over the pain he could not quell.

"Masters are makeshifts and a path to tread
For blue pumps that are ardent for the air.
Features are fixtures when the face is fled,
And we are left the husks of tarnished hair.
But he is one who lusts uncomforted
To kiss the naked phrase quite unaware."

It is a comedy he proposes, charming precisely for the reason he wished to mislead none by his masquerade. The great fun of the Patagonian sonnets flows from the excruciating solemnity with which he advertises his emotions the frivolous attitudes of an "incurable *poseur*," letting

"His calm moustache point to the ironies
And a fawn-coloured laugh suck in the night
Full of the riant mists that turn to white
In brief lost battles with banalities."

Observe how slyly he overplays the exaggerated, coxcomb, 1890
metaphor, adjective or noun:

"Forgetting her mauve vows the Fania fled
Taking away her moonlight scarves with her—
There was no joy left in the calendar
And life was but an orchid which was dead.
Even our pious peacocks went unfed. . . ."

An impeccable art? Quite an uneven one, particularly in the sonnets. Choppy lines tending to halt with the rhyme stand among suavely flowing ones. Rhymes too facile, recalling the indissoluble union of strife with life, clash with distinguished correspondences of sound. Images and terms too *aesthetic*, florid beyond the experience of even an ironic cavalier, detract from the surprise of images born of sensation:

"The flutes were hushed that mimed the orange moon"

or

"Chastely he spends an hour every day
Erecting tombstones to carnalities."

Only the tenderness and quiet music of the birthday piece commencing:

"There is what is, and what there is is fair,"

wins pardon for the unacknowledged debt to Gertrude Stein and The Portrait of Mabel Dodge. The diablerie wipes all remonstrance out. Some of the sonnets are fanfares defiant in the curve of trumpeted emotion. Or brigantines full-sailed and aflutter with all the pennants of pride. The very lines of songs of ruth tilt upward:

"Time that had marked him for the least of sages
Pointed the hour . . ."

Ultimate verses stand acrobats at the close of vaudeville turns,
"Voilà!" upon their lips, twisted wrists and fingers pointed star-
ward:

"And then I danced along the boulevard!"

and

"She triumphed in the tragic turnip field!"

and

"He felt he had used the finest snub of all!"

The *élan*, mock-heroic in instances, in others approaches a pure lyri-
cism:

"Crapulous hands reach out to strangle thee,
And every moment is a winding sheet
With bats to chant corruption's litany.
Be thou a torch to flash fanfaronade;
And as the earth crumbles beneath thy feet
Flaunt thou the glitter of a new brocade!"

Burlesque, mock-heroic, or direct and lyrical, the feeling of life
moves recklessly, swaggeringly "across the rotting pads in the
lily lake."

Evans' luxurious touch deploys itself amidst the clear metallic
music. Kreymborg has remarked the precision and beautiful
modelling of his phrases. His senses must have been aware of
magnificent textures, billowing grain, voices "fleet-limbed and
immaculate," loveliness of pearls "sheer and shimmering." The
words come suave as silk: "Song for the minnow and a crystal
pool," "Repeated payment of inutile toll," "haunting coins to
meagre beauty flung," et cetera. Evans' vocabulary had the free-
dom born of relativism. Although he did not commence making

poems in the frank spirit of relativism, he was one of the first of contemporaries to find the new form of expression destined to liberate not only himself; and he utilized the opportunity offered by the new way of using words in synthesizing his rich little orchestra of precious and mordant terms. While the timbres, the textures of Stevens and Pound, may leave Evans behind, he stays in the race of sensuous, "modern" poetry.

It is as a dandy, then, perhaps a unique example, that he figures in American literature. True, his last little collection, *Two Deaths in the Bronx*, introduces, in one single satisfying expression, a new aspect of Donald Evans. The poet of *Two Deaths* is master of him of the *Sonnets* in several faculties. He indulges more infrequently in emotional rhetoric, is obliged to find fewer stopgap phrases. If there is greater poison and pain in his ideas, there is greater polish and effortlessness of handling. Irritations scream beneath an ivory surface. And in the shade of ironism a simpler flower grows. The amazing new note, the truly major note come at length to Evans, is found at its roundest in the first of the two poems *For the Haunting of Mauna*, beginning

"Suave body of the Queen, she gave me you,
Misting in still warm rains of tenderness,
But kept herself, and we are each betrayed."

Here for the first time passion was shot with warmth. There had been sensuous feeling, but never an apprehension of beauty as selfless and pierced with the pangs of tenderness and impermanency. Had Evans managed to survive another decade, he might have advanced broadly upon the positive high road reached at last. Yet, in the words of a modern chronicle, "not many days later, Donald was found dead in his room—and rumor reported that his own hand had concerned itself with the end." But if it is in the figure of the "fawn-coloured laugh sucking in the night" he must remain, it is to no disadvantage, and with a fine distinction. "The ablest of our sonneteers," Kreymborg has dubbed him, praising his quatorzains, "the form no American has ever surpassed him in." For us, if an American *Lovelace* exists, it is Donald Evans. What matter what he *said*? The verve, suavity, reckless music returns upon him permanently to clothe him.

AN EYE

BY JOSEPH AUSLANDER

In that pale hour taken
Only by the dense preliminary twitter
Of birds whose throats are shaken
As the dew's dust from the leaves
They shake or as the centaur heaves
His flank's dripping,
His hoof's glitter—
So I, slipping with the earth, slipping
Over the sleep-edge between sleep
And waking when the eyelids keep
The worn seams of their web from ripping,
Hung suspended in a dream
As the spider hangs, and in that station holds
Outstretched the groined arch that would seem
To hold him, held and was held in seven folds
Of a staring scheme.

I saw with the heart's throbbing centre (an eye
That did not see so much as feel)
Tremendously the whirlpool stream
Of men and motors boiling by
Out of a cauldron of steam and steel
Into a cauldron of steel and steam;
I stood at the cross-roads of the world
And watched with my heart the street
Churn traffic like a black surf, beat
With shoes and sticks and hands and feet;
I heard the heat
And the horn's blare, the siren's scream,
The purr of rubber, the wrench of the wheel
Whistled from traffic tower to tower, hurled
Through short spasms of space, twirled
Like a spinning little top
From stop to stop.

I heard a thousand wheels wince
Under the throttle of brakes; I saw
Men and motors crash—the splints
Of wind-shield glass, the bleeding skull, the raw
Flesh torn by the Olympian claw:
I turned my head away in sick
Recoil, but my heart was rooted still
Against its will by a massive will
That made it stick;
And I cried, "Let me go!"
Something said, "No."

And I saw rain
Thudding and swirling down
Swarthily on the insane
And splendidly terrible town. . . .
And I heard again,
Fogged by distance, twinkling as through a sieve
Of silver, the cool and tentative
Twitter of sparrow and chaffinch and lark
Splashing from wet leaves; and I smelled the dark
Smell of the steaming bark,
Pungent and novel, and the smell
Of young twigs and the yearning earth; and I heard
Bird after bird
Spill silver into a silver bell;
And I knew cattle were standing under the line
Of the living thunder,
Standing under
All the yellow lightning and the fine
White fury of water because I could smell the kine,
And my nostrils dilated, drinking the beevish wine;
And somewhere near at hand the shrill
Exultant snuffle of horses on a hill
And the good grunt of swine;
And the odour of straw
Rain-soaked, warm with dove and owl. . . .
Then suddenly I saw, or my heart saw,
Machines and men churning in a black bowl

At the cross-roads of the world, and the howl
Of men and machines struck at my face like a claw,
And I cried, "Let me go!"
And heard, "Not so."
And I looked and saw a jungle mocking
The leopard lozenged with gold who had sprung
Into a barrel's spit—
And I fell down with it;
And I heard a trigger click like a death's hand clocking
The second, and I was flung
On the trumpets of assault unlocking
The lion's lung;
And I saw the beauty of the lioness rocking
Behind green coals, bitterly blocking
The last yard to her young;
And I saw the panther when there is no help
Rolling a blind gaze on her whelp
And licking it with her tongue;
And I saw the bengal tiger charted black,
With lightning on his back
Shot down and stripped, or slung
Over a shoulder, or in the track
Of his long plunge and lone attack
Left for dung!

And the Eye in my heart glowed:
And I saw a ship in a shouldering sea
Strain at her strength,
And shudder through her length,
And spark her doom through the sky;
And I heard the metallic cry:
"Women and children first! Stand by!"
And I saw the life-boats lowered—and smeared
Flat as you smear a fly;
And I saw some quick little fellow who feared,
Shot down gurgling in his beard;
And I saw the decks cleared;
And I saw them try again and try
Again, but the seas were running high;

And I saw a-plenty jump—and die;
And I heard the ship's orchestra strike up brave
Brass—and the ship went down with her load
Of people and bottles and plates, leaving the wave
In that place,
Leaving the stillness to rewrite, the water to erase.

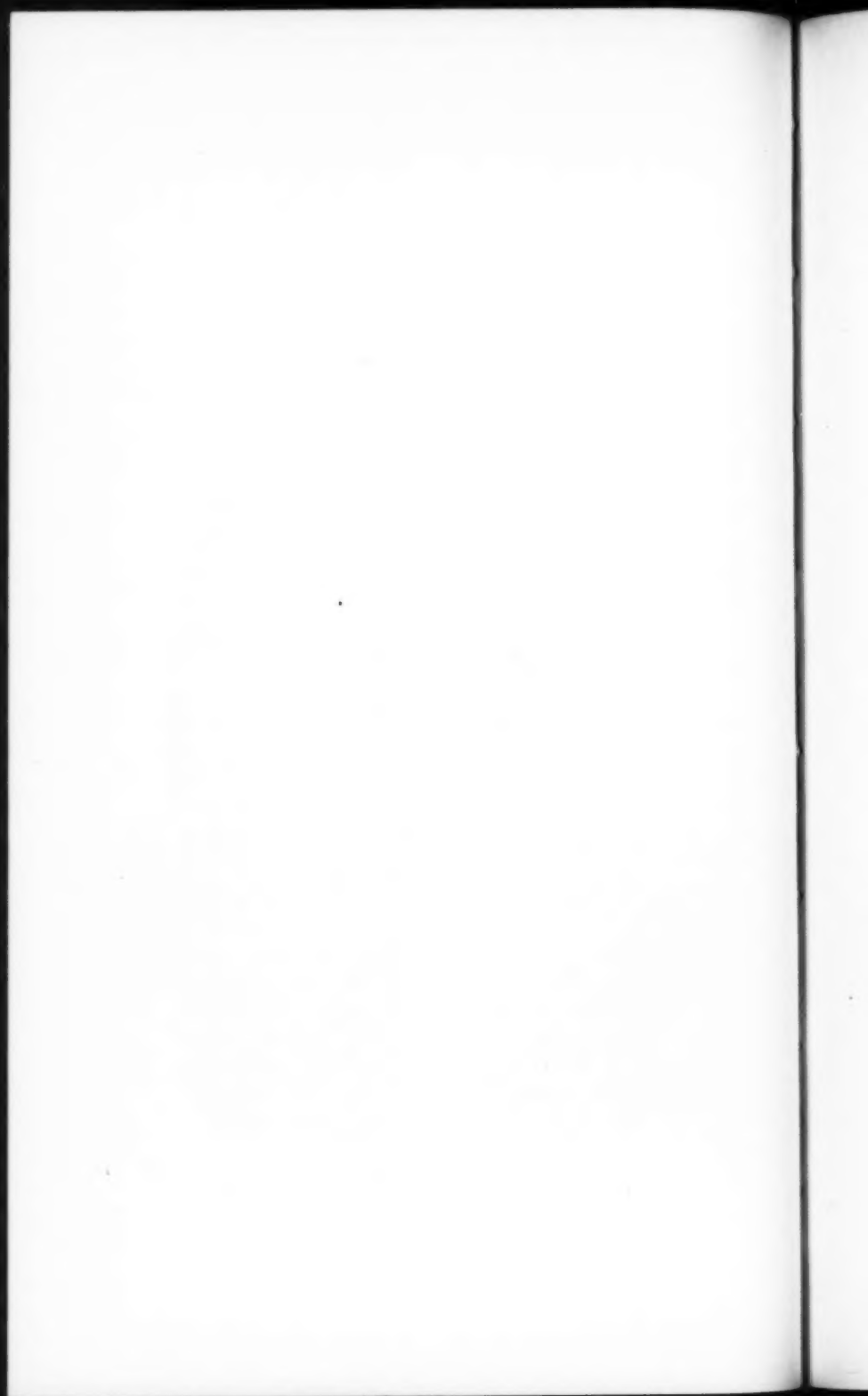
And I heard the murmuring of all the surfs on all
the beaches of the world
Boom in the ear's hollow cave, and I cried
"Let me loose now! I have seen how men
and ships in their pride
Have gone down and died;
I have heard their drums and seen their colours curled
Under like shells—and then heard nothing beside,
Seen nothing but water divide
Decently and close once more and abide." . . .
And my heart's Eye was turned
In on itself and eyed
Dirty corners there that burned
With many a horned lust, livid spots
That reeked of purple and flesh-pots,
Stamped with the hooves and chariots
Of the Assyrian treachery;
And on the wall a Hand that traced
In the dust and webs the words
"Thus Belshazzar was effaced—
Though not his accusation!" . . . And
All at once a clamour of birds
Filled my heart like a hand
Filling a hole or like a ghost's
Form flowing through a room:
And I heard a sound like doom
Moving, and I knew the Host's
Breath: "Behold your puny boasts
With the worm in his lodge!
Salute your garrison of hawks!"—
And I could not stir,
I could not stir. . . .

The Voice resumed: "Place-coveter,
Apparel-coveter, look upon
The hawk-thoughts of your garrison!
You that see and hear so plain
Others in their pride and pain,
What is it that lets you kiss
The icon of your cowardice?
Think you to escape the fault
By exalting me, exalt
Your own forehead, salve your soul
With my myrrh and aureole?
You have looked and you have seen
Man the tool of his machine;
Heard the valves and pistons groan
Mute, and leave their lord—alone
With his feeble blood and bone;
You have stared into your heart
And found your brother's counterpart:
For every stain on his head
You shall bleed as he has bled,
And the dead shall bury the dead;
Now I go—but I release
Your heart to desperate peace! . . .
And I heard shouting in the street
Where men and motors meet;
And my eyes followed the tall
Blur of light from window-frame to wall—
And that was all.



Photograph by Druct

FEMME ACCROUPIE. BY ARISTIDE MAILLOL





Photograph by Druet

FEMME ACCROUPIE. BY ARISTIDE MAILLOL





Photograph by Druet

FEMME ASSISE. BY ARISTIDE MAILLOL

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CANE RIVER

BY LYLE SAXON

SUSIE was not a native of Cane River country. She came here with an old woman called Aunt Dicey, from somewhere down Bayou Lafourche way, from southwest Louisiana. She was a bad one, always—a wild nigger girl with short hair that she combed straight out; and she wore nutmegs on a string around her neck, to ward off evil spirits. She was skinny and ugly; perhaps it was her very ugliness that filled the black men with unrest, as she went flaunting by. An untamed savage, that's what she was. "Trick-nigger" they called her—little old Susie with her scrawny arms, her rolling eyes, and her barbarous ways. Why, you could hear her laughing as she went traipsing through the fields, half a mile away. "Dat's dat Susie," folks would say, as they heard the shrill scream of her laughter coming across Cane River at night, "Dat's a crazy chile!"

She and Aunt Dicey lived in a tumble-down cabin, not far from the African Baptist Church, and Aunt Dicey washed clothes two days of each week, for the white folks at Yucca Plantation. She made a little garden, too, and kept chickens. She got along with everybody.

But that Susie! Oh, she was a bad one. First one boy, and then another: that long black boy of Papa Chawlie's, and the mulatto son of Ambrose Jenks—and even Babe Johnson, bandy-legged and undersized. But Susie favoured Big Brown. He was six feet tall, and his profile was like that of Ethiopians in Egyptian carvings. And Big Brown had a way with woman. Not that he was the marrying kind. He wasn't. He had learned city ways when he spent a year at Angola, the State Penitentiary, for shooting another negro one Christmas night . . . just shooting for nothing, being drunk and in a good humour.

Well, there's no stigma attached to the penitentiary, on Cane River. Many of the black boys have been in for a year or two, for bigamy, or a shooting scrape, or for some other minor offence like that—and it is rather like sending a boy off to college. Lord! Some of

them are proud of it when they come back to the plantation again. Or, at least, Big Brown was that way. He came back to Cane River when Susie was fourteen, when her popularity was at its height. There was little Babe Johnson, for instance. She flouted him with her wild antics and her monkey-shines. But Babe followed her, and used to slip up to Aunt Dicey's cabin on summer nights, carrying a big watermelon for her, on his shoulder. And Susie would eat it, there on the gallery, spitting out the seeds at him and making fun of him.

Then Big Brown came slouching up. He would take her to church, or to picnics, or fish-fries. She would come running. Aunt Dicey hated Brown, and tried to make Susie behave herself. But Lord! That Susie! Might as well try to make the sun stand still.

When trouble began to brew, well—Big Brown went off somewhere into the hills, and Susie was left alone with Aunt Dicey in the cabin on the river bank.

"I tol' yer so! I tol' yer so!" Aunt Dicey said over and over, as she sat rocking her ample body back and forth. But Susie, misshapen and ugly, would stand looking out of the door, to where the big red moon hung low in the sky over Cane River. Sometimes she would be racked with great sobs that shook her thin body. At other times she would laugh shrilly and say: "I don' keer! I don' keer!"

A month before the baby was born she married Babe Johnson. For Babe loved her, and that was the only way he could get her. Susie didn't love him, and didn't want to marry him; but Aunt Dicey begged and argued, and talked of the disgrace, and of "gettin' read out in chu'ch"—a terrible punishment in the old woman's eyes—and Susie gave in.

That sort of thing happens oftener than one would suppose, on Cane River where we plantation negroes know less of white folks' conventions than other negroes do. Here, you do what you want to do—and usually, that's the end of it. Babe had his dreams doubtless. This bad start—well, they would get past it and Susie would make him a good wife. And he would have her all to himself then—Susie, who turned the heads of all the nigger men, ugly old Susie, with her woolly hair, that she disdained to straighten with "ointment" as the other girls did, but which she wore standing

on end, like a savage woman—Susie, with her skinny, mis-shapen body, and her big bare black feet, with charms dangling on dirty strings around her ankles.

So they were married, the baby was born, and they lived in a new cabin that Mr Guy built for them not far from Aunt Dicey's. For Babe was a favourite with Mr Guy, who considered him the best field-hand that he had. Oh yes, Babe stood well with the white folks at Yucca Plantation, and they thought that Susie ought to thank her lucky stars that she had found a man who was willing to provide for her, who would buy her sleazy pink dresses, and plenty of cheap white lace to sew on them, or would let her buy red bandanna handkerchiefs to sew together into dresses, Cane River style.

Now Mr Guy was not entirely pleased with Babe's marriage, because he liked Babe and considered him a fine boy. Even if he was slow in his work, his slowness was methodical; if Babe set out to do a thing he finished it. But Susie! Just one step from actual madness, with her monkey-motions and her ape-like chattering. The mentality of a child of five. And who would have guessed that quiet, stolid Babe would be taken in by one of these trick-niggers! But the white man could never realize that the girl's very savagery was more provocative than the charms of those negresses who had taken on a veneer of civilization from the white folks. Just one bold side glance from Susie would send the black boys nudging and guffawing, as she swaggered barefoot down the dusty lane, a watermelon balanced on her head, singing as she went.

Mr Guy's hard and fast code was: "Make your negroes work; make them respectful; try to treat them fair—but hands off in affairs among themselves, for these private things do not concern you." Mr Guy felt that he did not understand his own race any too well, and there were things about negroes that were beyond him—although he had been born on a plantation, and there had been negroes around him all his life. The black folks liked Mr Guy. He didn't "meddle them," as so many of the white planters did. That was the reason Mr Guy never had labour troubles, and why there was never a vacant cabin on Yucca Plantation. And, as he always tried to play fair with them, he made no comment when Babe threw himself away on Susie. He told Babe that he could take that new cabin on the river bank, next door to Aunt Dicey's,

near the lane that led to the church—a cabin built under a big Chinaberry tree, just across the river from the plantation store.

Babe and Susie got along fine for a while. The loiterers could hear her laughing in the evenings. For it was upon the store gallery that the black men gathered at night, loafing and "visitin'" together; the deserted building, tight-barred and dark, was their nightly meeting place; it was their club, their refuge from hot cabins full of squalling black children.

"Susie done quiet down," said Papa Chawlie, one night as they sat looking across the placid water to the light that glimmered in Babe's cabin.

"Babe's done bought him a 'cawdeen," commented a shapeless black shadow at his elbow.

An accordion, he meant. That was nice, too, because Susie could play upon the mouth-organ, and they heard her often, playing "blues" through the summer night. It was wrong, of course, because folks that belong to the church have no business playing the blues. It's ungodly. After you are baptized, you must give up your sinful ways, and play and sing hymn-tunes, or spirituals, or "ballots," or "jump-up" songs about folks in the Bible. Some of them are lively enough. There's that one beginning:

"Delilah wuz a woman, fine an' fair,
Pleasant-lookin' wid her coal-black hair . . ."

That was a grand one, with its surging refrain:

"Oh, if I wuz Sampson, I'd pull dat buildin' down!"

Law! But that Susie! No ballot-tunes and jump-up songs for her.

"I got a gal, so lean an' so tall,
Her big mouf flops open like a red parasol!"

Susie would shout shrilly, all thirty verses, some of them filthy, and Babe's accordion would accompany her, with its irresponsible whine. Sometimes, Babe would sing, too, tunes he had learned in lumber camps long ago:

"Oh, I got forty dollars, an' I-got it fo' to spen',
If the wimmin don' wan' it, gonna give it to de men!"

That was all of it, two lilting lines, ending in a wail. Susie liked that one and would join in with a wild shriek on the mouth-organ.

But the happiness was after all only transient, for Big Brown came back. He came slouching up to the store gallery one night, just as though he had never been away at all, and had never heard of Susie or the other girls.

"Who's dat singin' de blues, ovah de rivah?" he asked Papa Chawlic, and the old man answered: "Yo' know widdout my tellin' yo', Big Brown, dat's Susie singin'."

Brown said "Huh!" That was all, but the men on the gallery knew that his return meant unhappiness for Babe, and they were sorry, for they liked him.

And so it turned out, for Susie welcomed Big Brown with open arms. Not before Babe, of course, for Brown chose times when Babe was absent in the cotton fields; but he came to the cabin, and Aunt Dicey saw him go. She went down, herself, later, to remonstrate with Susie. But Susie just laughed and rolled her eyes. Oh, she was a bad one; no mistaking that.

It wasn't long before Babe knew, for gossip spreads rapidly.

Well, on Cane River the proper thing to do, if you can no longer ignore your wife's misdemeanors with another man, is to pick a quarrel with him on some pretext, beat him, or kill him, as you can, and then the affair is settled. And pretexts are always easy to find. So Babe brushed against Big Brown, a little too roughly, one noon on the store gallery, and the fight ensued. But, of course, Big Brown had it all his own way. He beat Babe as one would beat a mad dog, and finally grabbed him by the shoulders and pounded his head against a roll of barbed wire that lay there by the cotton scales. Mr Guy, hearing the scuffling, came out to see what it was all about, and he was so angry to see such brutality, that he picked up a club and gave Brown a crack over the head that would have killed a man whose skull was thinner.

But Brown bore Mr Guy no grudge. Mr Guy had his conventions, too, and both Babe and Brown knew that it was not the thing to fight on the store gallery. After a time, some men took

Babe home in a rowboat, and Susie tied up his head with a white cloth, soaked in turpentine, the only antiseptic that was handy. Brown got his senses back, after a while, and staggered off to the cabin where he lived, down the lane that led to the gin.

The fight was over, and after that, when Babe and Brown passed in the road, they spoke as before:

"Howdy, Big Brown!"

"How 'bout yo', Babe?"

That was all. And not long after, Brown began slipping to Babe's cabin again, in the day-time, when Babe was plowing out in Mr Guy's field. And Babe knew it, and, before long, Susie knew that Babe knew it.

But Susie didn't care. She was a bad one. Reckless, too, and laughing out in her sleep at night, like a crazy woman, until the sound waked Babe, and he would lie there in the moonlight that came in through the open door, and curse his weak body . . . Oh, yes, Susie was a bad one, right enough, but Babe loved her. That was what hurt. For Babe knew that Big Brown didn't love her. He would lie awake until the moon set, and the grey mists hung low over the water; and he could hear the first roosters crowing, as they came fluttering down from the fig-trees by Aunt Dicey's cabin. Then, sleepless, he would rise, and wake Susie to make the coffee before he put on his overalls and hat, and went out to his day of plowing.

It was hard to find a way to get at Brown. For he wasn't employed on Yucca Plantation. He just lived there, as a good many others did. He was a trapper, that was why he went away into the hills and remained for days at a time. Sometimes, though, he made shorter trips, into the swamps a few miles back from the river bank. Bad places, those swamps, with their snakes and fevers; but Brown trapped 'possums and coons and skunks and even foxes there; and he sold the pelts. Sometimes he would be gone for a week, and would come back with a pile of hides that he sold to a man who came from New Orleans, once a month or so, to Mr Guy's store. The man always paid in cash for the pelts, and so Brown had, nearly always, some money in hand—not commissary cheques, like the rest of us, to carry us over the periods of depression between the times when we sell our cotton, and, for a few weeks, have money to throw away with both hands.

Once Brown gave a string of beads to Susie, red beads unlike anything ever seen on Cane River before. The man who bought the pelts, brought them from New Orleans to Big Brown, in exchange for a particularly fine skin. And Susie flaunted those beads, although half a dozen negroes had seen Brown get them from the white man. Oh yes, Susie was a bad one. In spite of Aunt Dicey's prominence in the African Baptist Church, the members took a stand, and had Susie "read out."

That is supreme disgrace—and on Cane River, it means that you are barred, not only from the church itself, but from all church activities and festivities—and these festivities of church folks are the only entertainments we have. But Susie just flounced, and said she didn't care. On Sunday, she sat on the gallery before her cabin, wearing the red beads, and with the baby on her knee—Big Brown's baby—and played on her mouth-organ. Played the blues, mind you, over and over, while people were passing on the way to church. Aunt Dicey shuddered, and thought of the red hell Susie was going to.

And Babe brooded. Day by day, he grew more morose, more silent. Finally, even Susie, old foolish Susie, noticed it.

"W-what yo' studyin' bout, Babe?" she asked him, once, with something like fear in her voice.

"I'm studyin' bout Sunday," he answered. Only that. It might mean anything, but Susie asked no more. He had never asked her why she had stopped attending church, and why she had suddenly lost her old passion for shouting and singing hymns on Sunday morning.

It was just at this time that Big Brown ordered the bear trap from Mr Guy—a brutal-looking steel trap, a trap so large that it came in a crate all by itself. For, back in the hills, miles away, where Big Brown rode, beyond the scarey woods that were full of malaria mosquitoes and bullfrogs and cotton-mouthed moccasins, he had come across bear tracks. And a bearskin, nowadays, was not to be despised. There were cubs, too. Brown had seen their tracks in the soft mud by a spring. Yes, God only knows what lies in those remote hills beyond the swamp, where no one lives, and few go, and where buzzards breed in caves on barren hillsides. "Carencro Roost" one hill is called—and from the Cane River valley, on clear days, you can see the buzzards circling high in the

air, above its summit. But the buzzard hill seems as remote as the moon, although it is hardly more than ten miles away, through the swamp. On Cane River we do not wander too far away from the watercourse. The barren hills and swamps are not for us. We prefer to gather together in groups, where we can have our churches, and our social life, and where our work is waiting for us. No, the hills and swamps are not for plantation negroes, except of course for those bold and reckless spirits like Big Brown. It was along the dimly-marked trail to Carencro Roost that Brown toted the bear trap, slung over the back of a white pack mule he had borrowed from Papa Chawlie.

From the field, Babe saw him go, and bowed his head over the plow: "Git up, Mule!" he said to the beast that stood with drooping head in the simmering sun of August.

That night Babe asked Mr Guy's permission to get Papa Chawlie to substitute for him in the field, while he went to town, twenty miles away.

"Business?" Mr Guy smiled quizzically, and almost asked a question, but, remembering the Cane River code, merely nodded assent. Better let him go now, and get it over with—whatever it was—for next month would be cotton-picking time, and Babe couldn't be spared then, as he was a valuable man at the gin. However, Mr Guy did say that he hoped Babe wouldn't be gone long. The code permitted so much, at least. Babe couldn't promise, exactly. It might be a week before he got back—he had important business to attend to.

Now everybody knew that Babe had no business in town, unless it was "legal business"—and that meant only one thing. So, in the evening speculation was rife, there on the store gallery; language was guarded, but the word "divo'ce" was bandied about. It was after nine o'clock, almost time to go, when Papa Chawlie said, suddenly:

"Fo' Gawd! Look at 'er, an' lissen at 'er!"

For Susie, brazen-faced Susie, was sitting on the gallery of her cabin, sitting there in plain view, with Big Brown lolling on the floor beside her; and she was playing for him upon the mouth-organ, playing the blues. Across the narrow river, the wailing strains came, whining with slow, suggestive undulation.

The watchers in the dark said no more than "Ump!" or "Aie-

Yie!" those two expressions into which the negro can pack all human emotions, scorn, love, or mere lazy comment. After a time, they saw the two forms silhouetted in the cabin doorway, against the light of the smoky oil lamp. And presently, the light went out.

Then, the men on the store gallery yawned, and said good-night to each other; and mounting their sleepy horses, rode slowly down the moonlit road, toward their cabins, dotted along the river bank. Yes, surely, Babe was justified in getting a divorce from that woman. She was just a low-down trick-nigger. No mistaking that.

But Babe was not, as they thought, riding toward town. As soon as he was out of sight of the store, he stopped the old calico pony and looked to the right and to the left. Then he turned the animal's head into the cotton rows, and kept on through the field. Nobody was plowing to-day, and there was no cabin from which the spying eyes of a woman could see him. Presently, he drew rein at the place where the cotton rows met the woodland. And again he looked about. Only the field, simmering in the sun, and the cool shadows of the moss-covered trees before him. He sighed. Then he clucked his tongue, and the thin pony began to go forward into the woods: "Git up, Hoss!" he said.

For hours he rode, the horse picking its way through the brush, avoiding depressions and fallen logs. By looking at the westerling sun, Babe was able to make the wide circle he intended. At twilight, he had reached a point some eight miles back of his own cabin, and in the heart of the swamp. It was too late to go further, so he dismounted and unsaddled his horse, tying him with a rope so the animal could graze. From a sack tied to the saddle, Babe took a can of sausage, which he opened. He ate slowly. Then he lay down under a tree, watching the rising moon, and slapping at mosquitoes that whined over him—great black swamp mosquitoes, that settled on his face and hands like a veil and remained there until brushed off, dead. Finally, he put his bandanna handkerchief over his face, slipped his hands into his pockets, and lay on his back, looking at the moon through the red cloth. At last he slept.

At the first streaks of dawn, he was on horseback again. This time he rode forward, into the swamp, looking carefully to right

and left. Twice he changed his course. Finally, he found the trail for which he was looking—the tracks of two horses. This was the way that Big Brown had taken the afternoon before. Yes, surely, for further along, in a marshy place, Babe found both trails, one going into the hills, one returning. Babe rode carefully now, watching the ground intently, looking for something. It was nearly ten o'clock before he found the place where Brown had dismounted and left his horses.

Before him rose a steep hill, thickly wooded, and full of little ravines, depressions which had washed out in the tropical storms of bygone years, and which were now full of a dense undergrowth. Half an hour later, he found the trap, buried in leaves and soft earth, near the mouth of a cave in the hillside. It lay in a gully, a narrow place, approachable from only one side. The bait had been partially eaten by a 'possum or a skunk, or some other small animal, too light to spring the heavy trap.

Babe examined it carefully. Certainly, it was strong enough to break the leg of a horse—or man. He worked there for an hour before he succeeded in accomplishing his purpose; but, when he had finished, the trap was covered with a light layer of earth and rotting leaves, and was fully ten yards nearer the outer end of the gully, directly in the path.

Then he went back to his horse, tethered in the woods, and rode off. He hid the old pony in a thicket, a mile away—no use to be betrayed by the whinnying of an animal—and crept back on foot, to a point not far from the trail which he knew Big Brown would follow. There Babe waited, listening, and watching the sun which shone straight down.

Hours passed. The sun drew in and heavy clouds banked up in the south. Big raindrops came pattering down on the leaves. In the thicket, Babe smiled. All the better; no chance, now, for any one to see the tracks he had made. It seemed as though nature were working with him, for if this downpour had come yesterday, it would have been impossible for him to find the trap. He was wet through, as he sat there under the leaves. Toward twilight, the sky cleared and swarms of mosquitoes whined about him.

He began to wonder why Big Brown didn't come—and then, as his slow mind turned to possible reasons, he hung his head with shame. And the night closed around him. Sometimes he dozed; sometimes he sat motionless for hours, staring straight into the

darkness; sometimes he swayed back and forth, as Aunt Dicey had done in the cabin. He slept a little, too, lightly, like an animal; waking at the slightest noise, only to stretch his body and doze again. By sun-up, he was alert, lying motionless in the wet brush, looking out through a tangle of wild grape-vines.

It was nearly nine o'clock, he reckoned by the sun, when Big Brown passed on horseback, singing as he rode, singing Babe's own song:

"Oh, I got forty dollars an' I got it fo' to spen',
If the wimmin don' wan' it, gonna give it to de men!"

Babe heard it die away, and, peering out, saw Brown get down from his horse, and tie the animal to a branch. Then the big fellow disappeared into the woods, going toward the ravine.

A minute later Babe heard a sharp snap, and a wild cry. After a time—a great while, it seemed—he heard calls for help. At first they were sharp and frantic, then slower; finally they ceased.

It was a long way back to his horse, but Babe reached him after nightfall. From the bundle tied to the saddle, he brought out another can of sausage, ate hungrily, and when he had finished, drank from a spring, like an animal, lying flat on the ground. He brought his horse to the water and saw him drink, then tethered him where there was green, tender grass. That night Babe slept.

Shortly after daylight he crawled back to the hilltop. Brown's horse, tied to a branch, was whinnying and pawing the ground.

Hum! He'd have to do something about that old white horse. Couldn't let it stay tied there. The poor thing would starve. Must be mighty thirsty right now, too. Another thing. Suppose someone should happen to come riding by and see that horse, and investigate.

Babe took the bridle from its head, and gave the beast a smart rap with a stick. He stood watching as the horse went blundering into the brush, stopping half a hundred yards away to grasp greedily at the dewy grass. Babe followed it for half a mile or more, driving it further and further into the woods. He threw clods of earth at it, and the horse began to run, jingling the iron rings fastened to the saddle.

That afternoon Babe dozed by the spring, near his calico pony

as it munched the grass. It was pleasant by the spring. Little birds came down to drink, and if you lay quiet, they came quite close.

When he crept to the gully next morning, he saw long streams of red ants in the grass, going towards the trap.

The day was unbearably hot. Babe fanned himself with a bunch of dried grass, and dozed, and woke again to fight the mosquitoes and gnats. In the afternoon, he followed the stream that ran from the spring, until he reached a place where there was a bed of white sand. Here, he undressed and lay in the water that did not cover him. However, the sand was soft, and with a little labour, he was able to scoop out a depression big enough to fit his body; and he lay there for more than an hour, watching the leaves that drifted by in the slow-moving current: long green leaves, that were like little snakes; round red berries, like Susie's red beads.

That day was hot on Cane River, too. Mr Guy had given notice that two full hours' rest be given the men and mules at midday, instead of one, as usual, and it was nearly three o'clock in the afternoon before the plantation bell rang for the hands to go back to the fields.

Aunt Dicey, having come home in a flat-bottomed rowboat from the store, carrying a piece of salt meat in an old meal sack, turned in at the gate of Babe's cabin, deciding suddenly that she would stop and talk to Susie. Lately, she had given the girl a wide berth. But to-day, curiosity overcame distaste. She found Susie sitting listlessly beside the table, the baby in her lap. She looked—as the old woman said afterward—as though she were listening to some sound from a distance.

"What ails yo', Susie?" said Aunt Dicey, helping herself to a gourdful of water, from the pail on a shelf inside the door; "Is yo' worried becuz Babe ain't come back?"

The black girl shook her head, and the red beads clicked against a blue dish. The old woman bridled:

"It's scan'lous an' a shame," she said, "de way yo' wears dem beads, Susie. Gawd gonna strike yo' down. Yo' jus' watch!"

Instead of answering scornfully as usual, Susie raised one lanky arm and pointed to the China tree outside the door: "Look at dat

leaf, Auntie!" she whispered tensely, "Oh my Gawd, jus' look at it!"

The day was airless, no breeze stirred, but in the Chinaberry tree, one leaf was waving rapidly back and forth in the mounting heat-waves.

Aunt Dicey sniffed, as she saw Susie's shaking hands: "Ef yo's lookin' for sperrits, I speck yo' gwine to see sperrits," she said. But, sensing suddenly the realness of Susie's fear, she temporized: "Ah sho did heah a squinch owl in de tree, las' night. An' I heerd de dawg howl, too!"

Susie nodded. She looked long into the older woman's face, and then she said, in a hoarse whisper: "Auntie, sump'n done happen to 'im!"

"Babe's done gone to town to get a divo'ce f'um yo', dat's wat happen to 'im!" retorted Aunt Dicey. But Susie shook her head.

"Ah don' keer, ef he do . . . I don' keer!" . . . She gulped. "Auntie, sump'n done kotch Big Brown. All las' night, an' all de night befo', seems I heah 'im callin' . . . He say: 'Susie . . . Oh, Susie!' ovah, an' ovah. It wuz like a dyin' man, Auntie. . . . It wuz like a dyin' man!"

Dicey rose. "So dat's whut's wurring yo'!" she said. "Fo' Gawd, Susie! Don' yo' know whut dey's sayin' bout yo' at de sto'? Dey say, Big Brown done foun' out dat Babe's gone off to divo'ce yo', and he's lit out again. . . . Jus' like 'e done de fust time! Ha! Dat man don' wan' yo', Susie. He's jus' bewitch yo', dat's all!" And she moved toward the door.

"Fo' Gawd's sake, don' go an' leave me, Aunt Dicey . . . " Susie had taken the mouth-organ from the pocket of her apron, and was twisting it over and over in her fingers. But a voice from outside interrupted the words. Papa Chawlie was passing, and seeing Aunt Dicey emerging from the door of Susie's cabin, he hailed her:

"Hey, Dicey! Sump'n done happen to Big Brown! His ol' w'ite hoss is come home widdout 'im!" There was in his voice that joy which only evil tidings can evoke, "Yonder 'e is, grazin' in de lane by de gin. Good riddance to bad rubbish, ef yo' ax me!" And he shouted the last sentence, knowing that Susie would hear.

Suddenly, despite the stifling day, Aunt Dicey shivered, and turned back into the cabin. Susie was cowering against the chim-

ney, the mouth-organ still clenched in her hand, her eyes rolling wildly. A hoarse scream broke from her lips, and she put her arms over her face, as though to ward off a nightmare.

"W-whut yo' seein', Susie?" Aunt Dicey asked in a whisper, clutching the table's edge.

But the young black woman wheeled sharply about, and with the spring of an animal, was gone through the back door. Aunt Dicey could see her running, between the cotton rows, toward the swamp.

It stormed that night. Babe, crouched in a hollow tree, watched the blinding flashes of lightning, remembering how Susie feared it. Well, to-night, he would be back at Cane River, back with Susie, and master of his own cabin; in the morning that followed, he could return to his mules again, a peaceful man.

He dozed at intervals, despite the storm. Once, just at daylight he thought he heard screams in the woods, and lay listening, his hair tingling on his scalp, but heard no more; only the sougning of the wind, and the distant thunder.

By sunrise it was clear again; the rain had washed the air clean, and the sky was blue; the first rays of sunlight turned the dark tree-trunks to copper. Birds began calling in the thickets, and the soft moan of the wood-dove came with melancholy regularity, faint and sweet.

Shortly after the rising of the sun, Babe began his journey toward the gully. He went slowly, this morning, creeping along, keeping a sharp look-out, walking carefully in order to leave no trace. As he came near he saw a buzzard perched in a dead tree; and high in the air, another buzzard circling lower.

As his eyes descended from the tree to the path before him, he shivered and drew in his breath. For there was the print of a bare foot. Someone had walked with unerring step, directly to the trap, down into the gully.

Crouching in the bushes, he listened. Only the humming of insects came to him, and distant bird notes; the great song of the day was beginning as the sun rose. There was no other sound. Stillness, ominous silence. . . . Over in the gully, someone was lying in wait, spying upon him from behind the vines, for there were no returning footprints.

On hands and knees, Babe crouched, every nerve tense. Long minutes passed.

And then a thin, ghastly sound came to him—an incredible ripple, blown through reeds—music—a tuneless and discordant strain from a mouth-organ. It whined on the morning air, just one broken bar, then stopped.

A moment later, there was the rustling of leaves, and Susie appeared. She came staggering, slowly, her bare feet dragging.

She was quite close to him before she looked up, the mouth-organ against her lips, her woolly hair full of dew drops which glittered in the sunlight. She seemed incapable of controlling her eyes. He was not sure that she had seen him.

"Susie!" He moved toward her, his hand outstretched.

She started back, her eyes fixed upon him for a moment, an uncertain smile upon her face. Then, distressed and confused, she turned away from him.

"Come heah, Susie . . . I ain't gwine to hu't yo' . . ."

He advanced upon her, cautiously, as one approaches a frightened dog: "Susie . . . Susie . . . !" But she avoided him, running, floundering through the brush. Pursuing, he caught up with her in a little clearing, and came close.

"Susie, I ain't . . ." He grasped at her arm.

She jerked free and was off, under the trees, with a burst of loud, witless laughter. As soon as she had run a little way, she stopped and looked back at him, then raised the mouth-organ to her lips again; but as he came up, ran deeper into the woods.

In the clearing, Babe stood stupidly. From far off, an imperfect thread of melody was carried back to him—fainter and fainter—the same whimpering strain, over and over and over. . . .

SWANS

BY E. CLEMENT JONES

Where water pauses full nor seems to move,
To recaress his eyes man placed us there—
Instating our suave nonchalance to prove
Some pure reiteration of the rare—

Making us twice an image in that glass,
Using awhile as mirror not as blade
His thought, watching our calm designs repass
The aged shore of time—repass and fade.

The willow through the golden eve unveils
To him some sad luxurious pleasure,
Though not for him, but for herself she trails
Her separate, her watery treasure.

Patterns serene—so old—to him reflect
Their ancient freshness in this blue reprieve.
Wistful they come, from streams of far neglect,
Remass their brightness here, and reconceive.

The fountain to her pool returns again.
Hiding new bones old bones are flung to light.
Forgotten stars reall in showers like rain,
And in man's eyes retrace their ended flight.

Man still elaborates our simple ways
And simplifies our life's own subtle flood—
Inscribes the Swan in constellated rays,
But disregards the current of our blood.

He does us honour, but he makes us serve
His twy-formed need of some remembered core
With need to crush it, in reversing curve—
Putting us in, to take us out once more.



NAGLE

A DRAWING. BY EDWARD NAGLE.





A DRAWING. BY EDWARD NAGLE.

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LAST PAGES

BY ANATOLE FRANCE

With Annotations by Michel Corday

Translated From the French by J. Lewis May

III

THE DIALOGUE CONCERNING THE FUTURE

THE scene of this dialogue was to be a promenade at Cannes, and its characters the Baron de Ténar and his companions.

A young man was passing by, a young man of twenty, "fair as the day." Floris was amazed at the great number of such young men who take no interest in women or in politics, and who live entirely for sport.

Said the Baron de Ténar:

That's nothing new. Such were the young Greeks in the Golden Age. The young men belonging to a given district used to go to the house of the Master of Music, marching along in a body, observing order, all in step, though the snow should fall like flour from a colander. There they were taught the awe-inspiring Hymn to Pallas, the destroyer of cities, and the sound of their singing echoed far and wide. They retained the grave harmony of the traditional airs handed down from their forefathers. If any one of them took it into his head to play the buffoon or to sing with effeminate or far-fetched modulations, he was chastised as an enemy of the Muses.

At the Gymnasium, at the *palaestrae*, in the speeches in the Market Place, they were told how one might have a powerful chest, a clear complexion, broad shoulders, a short tongue. . . . They were taught to take delight in simple things. "Thou shalt go to the Academy and wander at ease beneath the sacred olives, a crown of flowering rushes on thy head, together with a sedate companion of thine own age. In the midst of happy leisure thou shalt enjoy the sweet odour that the smilax and the leafage of the

white poplar exhale, on the fair spring days, when the plane-tree and the young elm mingle their gentle murmur. Happy the young man who can recall such memories as these."

Such were the young men of Athens when life was simple and virtue regnant. They changed, as you know. Modesty did not reign for ever.

The young men "went to see the women dancing, never heeding lest in the midst of their ecstasy a harlot should toss them the apple. And their faces were pale, their shoulders narrow, their chests contracted, their tongues long, and their buttocks fleshless."

And the decadence of Greek manners, that has endured ever since the times when the Athenians "caught up their hair with golden cicadas," brought the Baron de Ténar to this conclusion:

It is true that races have a period of growth, maturity, and decay. But these phases are not clearly differentiated. There is much of maturity and old age to be discerned in the youth of a race, and there is still a deal of youth in its decrepitude. Could we discern straight away the age of any single country in Europe?

Anatole France denied that there was such a thing as progress, "save in the sense of sequence and succession, in which succession there are both gains and losses." The idea of progress in the sense of a continuous, indefinite advance, is a modern idea.

It belongs to the liberals of 1830. Nothing that we see in nature, or in the social condition of man, affords any example of it. What progress has there been, for instance, for those ferns, which were once trees in torrid solitudes frequented only by insects? In what way has the Ichthyosaurus, the Plesiosaurus, the Mastodon, or the Aurochs progressed? Or the whale, whose race is nearly extinct? The ants would long ago have been sovereigns of the earth if they had progressed in intelligence.

But what of man?

For countless centuries man has shown himself capable of perfecting his tools, but not his mind; and all the varied apparatus with which he arms himself will not save him from an oblivion like that of the mastodon and the aurochs. His race will perish. The fate of the race is inherent in the fate of the individual.

Man is not more intelligent to-day than he was of old. He

has accumulated resources of every kind and he employs them in order to create others; but the inventor of wireless telegraphy is not more intelligent than the inventor of the wheel.

He has more industry, not more brains. He makes war with more devices, but not with more intelligence, than the savage.

You don't think that in the end we shall return to the stone age?

I did not say there was no such thing as evolution. It would seem that the human race, like the individual, proceeds from infancy to maturity, and from maturity to old age. It will not go back to the stone age, but it will lapse into decrepitude.

All species begin; all species end. Mankind will have an end. We cannot know what thoughts stirred in the mind of the last of the mastodons, but may assume that they were not remarkable. It is scarcely probable that the last man will have a mind like Goethe's. He will die, and that will be the last stage of human progress.

It is a certain fact that men will continue to be cruel and blood-thirsty, so long as they go on eating the flesh of animals. Killing animals and killing men—there is but a step betwixt the two.

But plants also have life. To eat vegetables is still to carry out the law of killing which is imposed upon us. The vegetable world presents forms of life, you think, that are more negligible than the animal world? You are less impressed by them because they are not brought so vividly before you, that is all.

Until the extinction of this miserable planet, life will go on issuing from death. Eat nothing but salads, if you like; it makes no difference. To live, is to kill, and if you don't kill animals, you are still condemning them to death.

Man, like all other animals, only lives by slaughter. The first of the arts is to kill, the second is to procreate. Round about these two arts we have cultivated innumerable others which do but subserve and embellish the first two.

The obligation to kill, which is laid upon all animals which subsist upon this planet, the brevity of their cruel and painful existence, this law of carnage which dominates the world, this necessity for destruction, teaches us our nature and our end. We are destined to manure the earth, so that better and fairer forms of life may quicken on it.

But it was not only the extinction of the human species that Anatole France foresaw. He envisaged also the end of the planet, and thus the necessary curtailment of our hopes. The ultimate species which he thought might follow man could not improve indefinitely.

The sun will go out, the earth will go rolling on in space until the cataclysm which shall destroy it.

One of the characters then enquired whether it were desirable to reveal to mankind the infirmity of its condition:

To begin with, they would not believe me. They believe only that which flatters their hopes.

But some rare spirits, capable of realizing the truth, and of looking their destiny in the face will learn from my philosophy how to make the best of their unhappy condition and will find solace in so doing.

Believing that human nature is not perfectible, Anatole France felt that the conditions of social life could, and must, be ameliorated, and insisted upon the distinction between intellectual and social progress—the former, impossible; the latter, assured. The opponents of Socialism sometimes accept, and sometimes refuse to accept, Anatole France as an adversary, explaining his political attitude by saying either that he did not mean what he said, or that he was actuated by self-interest. It is an undoubted fact that the Dreyfus case, from the social still more than from the religious point of view, revealed him to himself, deciding his course of thought and action. Nevertheless, it did but precipitate and give a definite imprint to opinions which he already held. Glance once more at Jérôme Coignard, which was written before the Dreyfus case. He had always cherished within him the hope of better things and he had never ceased to long for their advent. As he conceived them they would accord with his need for harmony and moderation.

Harmony and moderation—this twofold ideal which he fostered in his heart was outraged at every turn by our existing social system with its feudal basis. It was the monstrous inequality in the conditions of life that had disappeared in the state of the future, such as he imagined it. In the picture of the future with which he concludes *The White Stone*, he puts the following words into the mouth of his apologists of the twenty-third century:

We have but a single word to express our social system. We say that we live in harmony. . . . We have made life endurable to all. . . . We see to it that each furnishes what he is capable of giving and receives what he himself has need of. . . . We have

set up work in honour. We have assured to everyone the means of livelihood. . . . Our organization is not immutable. But the progress of human civilization will henceforward be harmonious in all its stages.

Anatole France loved the working-classes, and was beloved by them. "He is one of us," the working-men used to say. Every face would light up with affectionate pride when he came to visit a workshop or a factory.

It may have been in 1917 that he was anxious to have some rebuilding done at the Villa Saïd, which he had quitted a few months before the war, without thought of returning to it. It was a difficult thing to get work done at that time, for all building was at a standstill. The various workmen, however, threw themselves into the work with a will, and when the house was finished, Anatole France could read in several of the rooms, scored with pencil on the plaster while it was still wet, the famous saying "The union of the workers will safeguard the peace of the world."

How, it may be asked, did Anatole France regard the prospect of a revolution? It has been stated that in *The Gods are Athirst* he condemned the French Revolution. Against that view he protested.

It was my design to show that men are not sufficiently perfect to mete out justice in the name of virtue and that in all their actions, gentleness and kindness of heart should be their guide.

When the Russian Revolution of 1905 was crushed by the forces of Tsardom, Anatole France gave public expression to his indignation, his compassion, and his hopes.

Whatever may be the issue of an enterprise so vast and awe-inspiring, the Russian proletariats have even now wrought a decisive influence on the destinies of their country and of the world at large. . . . When one accepts a doctrine, one must accept it in its remotest consequences. When one belongs to a party, one must be in the forefront where the fighting is thickest, at the point which is nearest to the future and at which the main body invariably arrives in the end. . . .

Not every revolution is attended by bloodshed. We are still brought up on the Classics, however, and we are given to dressing up sedition after the pompous models bequeathed us by the Roman historians.

It will be seen that he was still expressing the hope of a peaceful revolution in an address which he intended to make to the electorate in 1919.

Citizens:

By your votes it behooves you to condemn the *bourgeois* governments which have proved themselves alike incapable of preparing for war, of preventing it, or of waging it. Deaf to the warning voice of the great Jaurès and the Socialists, those governments imperilled the safety of the nation by the enactment of the Three Years' Military Service Law, a measure which reveals their complete inability to understand the conditions in which the shock of opposing nationalities would come about. When the hour struck they showed that they possessed neither the clearness of mind, nor the steadfastness of heart, nor even the honesty of purpose necessary to avert a conflict. The sole contribution made by them to the conduct of the war—what time the nation in arms was saving France from destruction—was to conciliate the capitalists at the risk of sinking the country beneath the burden of an appalling debt. And to-day they insolently boast of having prolonged this war of extermination beyond the limit necessary to secure the safety of the nation and, as a piece of crowning infamy, actually pride themselves upon having ended it by a peace as vague, contentious, and insidious as it is inimical to the true interests of France; a peace that is incomplete, and pregnant with fresh wars, with suffering and ruin.

Citizens, it behooves you to condemn the *bourgeois* governments who refused to disarm conquered Germany for fear of depriving France and the Allies of a reason for maintaining armies and arsenals and munition factories and all the criminal sources of capitalistic wealth. It behooves you to condemn the *bourgeois* governments, since, not content with suppressing in France all freedom, all political life, nay, all independence of thought, all semblance of thought even, they are at this moment doing their utmost, at the cost of lives and treasure, to drown the Russian Revolution in blood. They were not ashamed to ask Germany to assist them in enforcing the blockade of a great people and to bring about by starvation, the death, not only of the champions of Russian freedom, but of old men, women, and children; a policy so cruel that they were called upon by Germany herself to mitigate their inhuman measures.

By your votes you must condemn them.

Citizens, who speaks to you? What voice is that which swells

my own and lends to it a power so great, perhaps, as to find an echo in every generous heart? It is the voice of Socialism.

The Socialists present themselves to the people, alone, without alliances, without leagues, because they alone are innocent of the errors and crimes that marked earlier Societies, because they can suggest means of repairing ancient wrongs and have a concept of a new social order.

This new Society will rest upon a better organizing of labour, on a practical applying of syndical law; upon a resuming by the nations of great metallurgical undertakings and upon their again utilizing the chief means of transportation. That is the cornerstone of the building.

Citizens, let us not close our eyes to realities. Class war will not cease until the classes themselves have disappeared. This war, though we did not want it, has brought the hour of that disappearance appreciably nearer, and has created an economic situation that must prove fatal to that capitalist system which it, at first, so monstrously inflated. All things are hurrying us onward in the direction of Socialism, and the tide is bearing along with it, with equal rapidity, those who struggle against the movement, those who resign themselves to it, and those who fain would aid it.

Nothing will avert the revolution that must inevitably come, and which is even now being effected beneath our eyes. However, Citizens, it depends upon you, whether this shall be a peaceful revolution or a bloody one. It will be gentle and kindly to those who aid it and direct its course. Blind are they who cannot see that a new order is evolving. May it, thanks to your wisdom, unfold itself in tranquil majesty.

May the powers that be, strive to understand. Let them silence the voices of arrogance and greed. May they allow Justice and Peace to come to us.

What is Socialism? It is the conscience of the world!

He even foresaw the motto of the revolution that was to come.

All revolutions have their watchword. In the Revolution of 1789 it was the famous utterance of Siéyès on the Third Estate. The Revolution of 1830 was effected under the refrain, "Long live the Charter!" The Revolution of 1848 demanded a widening of the electorate. The next revolution will have its motto also. It

will be accomplished in the name of co-operation. The workers will demand a voice in the management of the great industrial enterprises. Co-operation and participation will take the place of salaries and wages.

THE DIALOGUE CONCERNING WAR

The notes for the Discussion of War date from the war itself:

I take sides with the Socialists. By the Socialists, of whatever nationality, war was, of necessity, tolerated. But they were not so inhuman, not so ferocious as the rest. In every country, they were, as a whole, less bellicose. When they were bellicose it was mainly through fear or motives of self-interest. A man made cruel by fear I prefer to the other sort, for when he no longer has anything to be afraid of, he becomes gentle again. And especially do I take sides with the *Confédération Générale du Travail*, which to my mind seems to have attained a more than ordinary degree of civilization. We look to the *Confédération Générale du Travail* to give us the United States of the World, to put an end to the era of international warfare. . . .

And to substitute civil war for foreign war. That is what progress will amount to, that the whole world shall in the end form a single state. . . .

Prodigious progress too. Civil war is not so detestable as war with a foreign foe. We at least know what we are fighting for.

L' Internationale Ouvrière is distinguished by intelligence, fairness of view, prudence, and sound sense. At the same time, it is an organization which from its very constitution and composition must, in its outlook upon industrial things, study the operative and the operative's point of view, rather than the object and policy of an undertaking itself.

When, in addition to labour questions, it takes into its purview all those questions which now exclusively occupy the Boards of Directors, *L' Internationale Ouvrière* will necessarily be split into sections. Will not these sections come to look upon the finding of markets, upon colonial problems, in fact upon all questions which engender war, very much as a German, a French, or a British

manufacturer would look upon them? In solving questions, moreover, as difficulties were solved by preceding directors, they will be just as war-like.

What means will these sections possess for settling quarrels by arbitration?

When armies are suppressed, won't they be re-established under the disguise of police forces?

Anatole France protested against the prolonging of the war.

We are easier in our minds at Tours. We are not afraid now that the war will be concluded all of a sudden. Nevertheless the weakness of the Central Empires is disturbing. Turkey has ceased to fight. Her troops are yielding. Her Pashas are selling themselves for money. Austria is surrendering unconditionally, and begging her adversaries to appropriate her. She still pours forth prayers; but even now has ceased to exist. She is in pieces, and no one knows which particular piece of her breathes forth these prayers to her conquerors. Germany is not quite so weak, and her resistance is encouraging; but she may crash down at any moment, and she makes no secret of the fact. And then peace might come about.

To avert that peril I put forward a proposal which is perhaps a bold one, but which will command the approval of all patriots. I wish to submit it to our Government. I demand that, with all due circumspection, the Allies should provide the Germans, the Austrians, and the Turks with the means necessary to enable them to continue the war—munitions, money, even men. The Allies have plenty of Blacks at their disposal, and could easily divert some of them in favour of their unfortunate adversaries. In this manner the menace of peace might still be postponed for a considerable period.

It would, of course, be necessary to stipulate that the subsidies so granted should be used by the Central Powers for continuing the war, not for securing victory. It would be merely a question of estimating the amount of the help to be given. As to their ready accepting of it, there is no room for doubt. They, too, have their war industries.

Enemy countries should not have any revolutions. The English,

who have their wits about them, will see that the Kaiser is kept on his throne.

In Europe and throughout the world the war has been conspicuous for bringing with it countless benefits; but of these, economic prosperity is the most notable. It has multiplied wealth and created an admirable financial situation—the workers being paid in paper; the soldiers, in glory. By a liberal use of bank-notes the various governments have ensured the welfare of the greatest number and satisfied all appetites.

The war has made government easy by suppressing all forms of freedom. It has buried in silence the mistakes of rulers and military leaders, smothering all complaints. Some deeds which we ourselves take pride in, become infamous when wrought by the enemy. Thus actions are called by different names according as they are in one instance, ours; in another, our foes'.

To love war because it makes heroes, is like loving croup because doctors and nurses have died in an attempt to save a child's life.

Several versions of the following letter have been published. It was written by Anatole France in 1917, and is here given as it appears in a copy which he sent to one of his friends with these words:

Here is a letter which I have had copied for you, as I thought it would amuse you. Show it to those who think as we do, if there be any such . . . A. F.

Cher ami:

I augur from your letter, that you are in good health, for it is a sturdy epistle and reveals a firm soul. It appears that we can make what terms of peace we like, and that it is merely a question of time; otherwise the Allies would not have dictated the conditions in advance, and you would not have confirmed them in your letter. Well then, seeing that it is open to us to make peace with or without victory, as may please us, I, following your example, indignantly repel the idea of peace without victory.

Can there be any satisfaction in a peace without victory?

A peace without victory is bread without leaven, jugged hare without wine, mullet without capers, *cèpes* without garlic, love without quarrels, a camel without a hump, night without a moon,

a chimney without smoke, a town without a brothel, pork without salt, a pearl without a hole, a rose without scent, a republic without dilapidations, a leg of mutton without a knuckle, a cat without fur, chitterlings without mustard, in a word, 'tis an insipid thing. Is it possible that when there are so many sorts of peace to choose from, those Socialists, with such an abundant assortment before them, should go put their hands upon peace without victory, a ramshackle peace, to employ your own original and powerful expression? Nay, what do I say, not even a limping, halting, hobbling peace, but a legless peace which will go and squat one buttock on each party, a disgusting, foetid, ignominious, obscene, excrementitious, fistulous, hemorrhoidal peace, or in one single word, a peace without victory.

But what can we expect from rascals who would put a tax on incomes and make the rich pay their share. And that is why, in the article which you annex to your letter by way of voucher, *Le Temps* has so relentlessly pilloried these enemies of the human race. One is conscious of a stern delight in reading it. The indignation of righteous men is beautiful and terrible to behold.

Oh, dear R—, how praiseworthy is this good taste of yours which makes you choose a well-made, perfectly formed, plump, fully developed peace, a peace that brings us honour and profit, in short, a victorious peace! True this nice peace may keep us waiting for it some time yet. But we are in no hurry. The war is only costing France ten thousand men a day.

To be concluded

PRAYER BESIDE A LAMP

BY YVOR WINTERS

*"Vasti quoque rector Olympi . . .
Non agat hos currus."*

I pace beside my books and hear the
wind stop short against the house like
a pneumatic gasp of death.
The mind that lives on
print becomes too savage: print that
stings and shivers in the cold when
shingles rise and fall: O God,
my house is built of bone that bends.

Beyond the roof
the sky turns with an endless roaring and bears all
the stars. What could you do?
Could you climb up against the whirling
poles alone? Grind through the ghastly
twist of the sphere? Could you maintain
a foothold on the rising earth for
night on night and walk the
creaking floor?

The steady courage
of the humming oil drives back the
darkness as I drive back sweating death:
from out a body stricken by this thought, I
watch the night grow turgid on the stair—
I, crumbling, in the crumbling brain of man.



Collection John Quinn

LA BOHEMIENNE ENDORMIE. BY HENRI ROUSSEAU

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BOOK REVIEWS

JOHN MASEFIELD

COLLECTED WORKS OF JOHN MASEFIELD. Poems.
*Two volumes. Prose Plays. Verse Plays. 10mo. The
Macmillan Company. \$12.¹*

WITH the publication of his collected works, a writer would say, in the words of Samuel Daniel: "This is my scene, this part must I fulfill." At this point book-reviewing ceases and criticism begins. It is not now a question of setting a current value on a current book but of sorting out from a profusion of works the small remnant likely to be of significance to the future—a task, by the way, which has always resulted in ludicrous error. One may well hesitate in approaching thus the collected works of John Masefield, for he is at once among the best and the worst of modern poets. Praise has often settled on his least meritorious poems, with the result that many intelligent readers turned away from him before he had shown what he could do. And indeed it is difficult to realize that the great artist who wrote *King Cole*, *The Hounds of Hell*, *Animula*, and *Wild Duck* should have evolved from the author of the *Salt Water Ballads* and *The Everlasting Mercy*.

As a rule, the romantic poet is like the peach-tree—his fruition and decay are the earliest, he seldom survives the fourth decade. The reverse of this order in Masefield's case and the extreme unevenness of his work indicate the importance of influences in his poetic development. These are not hard to trace. The poet began work under the worst possible of all poetic auspices, Kipling; he matured under the best, Chaucer. Hence the early works and three of the long narratives are falsely virile, class-conscious, bitter—"strong" in the rank sense employed by reviewers. These poems

¹ A most slipshod edition. A favourite arrangement with the sonnets, for example, is to print seven lines on one page and seven on the next. Mathematical, perhaps, but not effective. Parts of lines are run over to the left margin and given initial capitals. Prayer is printed twice. These are a few of many justifiable complaints.

were startlingly popular. In *Salt Water Ballads* we find a few sensitive lyrics, *Trade Winds*, *The Golden City of St Mary*, *Personal*, *On Eastnor Knoll*—but the thumping jargon of *A Consecration*, *A Night at Dago Tom's*, and *Cape Horn Gospel* drew the crowd. This influence from Kipling continued in the narratives after it had disappeared from the shorter poems; a rank weed, difficult to uproot, it still ran wild in the larger fields when the more intensively cultivated plots had been freed from it. The three longest failures, *The Everlasting Mercy*, *The Widow in the Bye Street*, and *The Daffodil Fields* make deep obeisance to the laureate of the people. The old widow who, we are told, had no joyous hours, never one (an observation more in fashion than its antithesis, but no less tedious) strikes the key-note of the monotonous "realism" which, by contrast, makes the verse form merely absurd. In these poems and in *The Tragedy of Nan*, which might better be styled her melodrama, we find a second influence hardly less unfortunate than the first: Thomas Hardy, classic in the novel, has no ear for the music of verse, its possibilities or limitations; and the same themes which raise his novels high among the most poetic in the world, become, in his bungled verse, unconvincing. Therefore, I can only count his influence as another obstacle in Masefield's career. But Chaucer is already at work, and if, in *Reynard the Fox*, his manner is perhaps too clearly imitated not to induce unfavourable comparison, nevertheless it is to his lovely and wise humanism that we owe the salvation of Masefield as a great poet from the late Victorian bathos in which he was floundering. A. E. Housman's touch is apparent here and there in the middle poems of Masefield. I ask a comparison of *On Malvern Hill* with Housman's *On Wenlock Edge the Wood's in Trouble*. Robert Bridges has been given more than a passing thought, and Conrad. And amid all the murk of *The Everlasting Mercy* how clear this fine echo from Blake's *Auguries of Innocence*:

"And he who gives a child a treat
 Makes joy-bells ring in Heaven's street,
 And he who gives a child a home
 Builds palaces in Kingdom come,
 And she who gives a baby birth
 Brings Saviour Christ again to earth . . . "

King Cole, by all odds the best of the long poems, shows the result of that alchemy by which these many elements are fused and come forth unmistakably excellent, unmistakably the poet's own. Nor should we forget two magnificent ballads, *The Hounds of Hell* and *Cap on Head*, where the Kipling forces are thoroughly routed on their own field.

Meanwhile there is *Dauber*. In the earlier narrative poems there was an increasing emergence of good passages which the critics, clamouring praise of qualities which almost proved the poet's undoing, never noticed. In *Dauber* the best predominates. The effective background for its own sake, the heavy local colour, the melodramatic assault on the nerves of the reader, all these faults of the young poet who sat at the feet of Kipling diminish to give place to a deeper understanding of human motives. *Dauber* begins with the same painful uncertainty which preceded the collapse of the other three poems. Then it lifts. The movement is surer. It lifts to the yard-arm of the labouring ship in mid-ocean; it is one with the lonely figure crouched on the spar. Then suddenly it hurls him down with as sure a stroke as I know of in narrative poetry. He thinks he is not falling, that it is his companion on the yard-arm above him! The realization of this reversed sense is *Masefield's* first climax.

But the achievement is *King Cole*, which starts at an elevation and reaches an altitude undreamed of in the earlier narratives. Its elements are simple enough: the old myth of the wandering dead, the hurly-burly of a market town during a Royal Progress, and a modern circus. Without stinting any of the lively scenes, the poet yet contrives to invest each character and event with a symbolism that is nobler, because more comprehensive, than allegory. Furthermore, this is a long poem, not a rhymed narrative touched up here and there with rhetoric. Realism and poetic intensity interpenetrate; the beauties blend in a work which, I venture to prophesy, will endure. Original in the best sense, *King Cole* has about it the revelation of mystery in familiar things that sets the *Pardoner's* apart from the other *Canterbury Tales*.

The tide of excellence which, in the narratives, reached its full only in *King Cole*, had long since flooded the more accessible inlets: the shorter poems. *Lollingdon Downs* is the least successful of these, for here, as occasionally elsewhere, *Masefield* swoons before abstract Beauty. I note that the continued effort to portray ugly-

ness realistically often unfits a writer for dealing as well with the forms of beauty. It is not surprising that Masefield sometimes suffers thus from the sordid excesses of his earlier work. But more and more he has looked about him with new eyes which recognize the living forms of Beauty that he was once content to invoke by name. *Incessu patuit dea*. The list of the shorter poems which show this growth toward perfection would be creditably large. Certainly it would include many of the sonnets, *Ships*, *Biography*, *Cargoes*, *Wild Duck*, *The Wanderer*, *The River*, *Cap on Head*, *The Hounds of Hell*, and *Animula*. It is noticeable, too, how much more powerful become the poems of the sea, as his self-consciousness as a "sea poet" wanes. *Cargoes* is familiar in the pages of *The Oxford Book*, *The Wanderer* is too long for quotation, so it is not to the sea poems but to a sonnet that I shall turn for an example of his perdurable works:

"THE LEMMINGS

Once in a hundred years the Lemmings come
Westward, in search of food, over the snow,
Westward, until the salt sea drowns them dumb,
Westward, till all are drowned, those Lemmings go.

Once, it is thought, there was a westward land,
(Now drowned) where there was food for those starved things,
And memory of that place has burnt its brand
In the little brains of all the Lemming Kings.

Perhaps, long since, there was a land beyond
Westward from death, some city, some calm place,
Where one could taste God's quiet and be fond
With the little beauty of a human face;

But now the land is drowned, yet still we press
Westward, in search, to death, to nothingness."

The Masefield of the *Salt Water Ballads* would have been incapable of realizing the mood which this sonnet expresses so strangely. He would, furthermore, have lacked the mere skill

for transferring the sense from the third to the first person, dragging the whole philosophical content with it. It is a small device, we say, when our attention is called to it; nevertheless, between the power to hit on that device and the early submission to influence, there lies the biography of an artist.

For Masfield's technique developed slowly. Delicate, but too adaptable, his musical sense could not receive without damage the influence of Kipling's metres—which afford the best justification for free verse that I know of. Their harsh and obvious rhythms continue to echo in Masfield's verse even after the jingle melody has been done away with. Housman's weaker side, as in *London Town*, and his better side, as in *On Malvern Hill*, did no great harm, and perhaps served as a transition to the subtleties of Chaucer, whose music saved Masfield's verse as his humanism saved its content. Thus we find "rhyme royal," an excellent narrative stave, as the stanza of *The Widow in the Bye Street*, *Dauber*, *The Daffodil Fields* (with a final Alexandrine), *The Dream of Daniel*, and in parts of *King Cole*. A new stanza form for each new narrative would have been a wiser policy, for one stanza, too long used, induces glibness and deprives the poet of a fresh metrical experience. Perhaps an instinct for such variation gave the poet the happy idea of using heroic couplets for the dialogue in *King Cole*. This form the poet handles generally with great skill, in the romantic manner. The Shakespearian sonnet, also, he has bent to his sometimes exacting purposes, and this pattern employed stanzaically in *Animula* and *The Haunted* contributes in no small measure to their beauty. Yet in three notable instances—and two of them not in his early work—Masfield runs by some of the brightest danger signals in prosody. The octosyllabic couplet, an essentially lyric measure, has been proved by the failures of some of the best poets in the language to be incapable of sustaining a long work. In long passages it becomes excessively tedious, and any effort at varying it merely roughens it without relieving its monotony. *The Everlasting Mercy* and *Reynard the Fox* add to the proof of this fact. Of course, modern verse shows a strong tendency to shift its appeal from the ear to the eye, but until the ear has definitely surrendered, poets are wiser not to disregard it. The septenary is deadlier than the octosyllabic couplet. Masfield's perception was at its dullest when he cast

Enslaved in that form. He himself revolted from it at last and without any urging from the context fled first into octameter, then to pentameter, in an effort to escape the horrid racket of the septenaries. It was too late. His reader had long since turned to another poem.

As I conclude this rather random appraisal of Masefield's work—a task which, because of the profusion and unevenness of his accomplishment, has been no light one—I am aware that I shall be taxed with passing over his plays in silence. It is not there, I believe, that his greatness lies. The Tragedy of Nan has its enthusiastic admirers, Pompey the Great is a more than usually successful tragedy of its type, The Faithful has moments of power. Among the plays in verse, Good Friday seems to me the only one that has any excuse for being reprinted, and that but a faint excuse. Melloney Holtspur moves us as do some of Barrie's plays—against our intelligence. The plays are poor, mediocre, or somewhat above the average; they are never great. Whereas many of the poems of his maturer years are indubitably great. Masefield has failed in some of his largest attempts. In my opinion he has succeeded in but one of them, King Cole. Yet even the failures have accustomed him to large conceptions and have given him a world that expresses itself in masses of material rather than in the isolated tendrils and filigrees which come within the minor poet's view. Even were his longer works swept away so that none knew they had been, we could tell from the packed significance of the shorter poems that we were dealing with a major poet. And as a major poet, Masefield stands among the very few in this age who will not become—to misquote the Greek Anthology—a handful of grey lyrics, long, long ago at rest. That is his scene, that part must he fulfill.

ROBERT HILLYER

LYRIC TABLEAU

THE REGION CLOUD. By Percy Lubbock. 12mo. 220 pages. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50.

PERHAPS the sum of Mr Lubbock's gifts is to be found in his imaginative and very fastidious appreciation of life. To him, it would seem, life is pictorial, proceeds as great scenes for the memory, now shining, now overcast, now grand, now minute, but always to be so discriminated and thought over as to yield some treasurable beauty. Some attitude like this, at least, seems to have coloured his methods of fiction, for his present novel might be described as bearing a relation to novels in general like that born by closet drama to the spoken. If novels in general are epic in tendency, then here is one that is lyric. Mr Lubbock's remark, elsewhere, that "an incident is of no value in itself, it is exactly as interesting as the author can make it," seems to have an importance here, in placing the emphasis not on the object of feeling but on the subject who feels. Perhaps it locates the author of *The Region Cloud* among those to whom the novel is not so much incident as mood. Certainly the bodied, rich, discriminate impressions which make up the whole substance of this tale seem not far from pure mood, not far, that is, from the lyrical.

It is to be supposed, perhaps, in a story made more or less of the stuff of dreams, that action, incident, will be insubstantial. It is. The eloquence of *The Region Cloud*—it is a rare eloquence—is spent upon the story, or we had better say, the scene, the tableau, of two men and the world, the world of applause, the world of glory, which, as the novelist resolutely notes, is trash, all trash. Of the two men, one, John Channon, the grand creative genius, is seen in the middle distance. The other, Austin, the obscure youth, is seen more simply and immediately, for it is in terms of his accomplished feeling that the tale is told. It begins in the dining-room of a French inn, begins with an exchange of glances by Channon and Austin, the one, so to speak, with the world's applause all about him, the other all but submerged in obscurity. Each discerns the mettle of the other, and they come at

once to an understanding founded on their joint recognition that the plaudits of the world are trash. In this understanding Austin is to become the proper audience of Channon and his genius, an audience select, sustained, apart, appreciating for what he is a Channon compelled to live and work in a world of trash. Austin carries out his part of the understanding, carries it out well, by virtue of his integrity and mental quality. It is not long, however, before conflict arises between his integrity and Channon's essential insincerity, an insincerity—it is implied—which is the penalty of glory, an insincerity because of which Channon cannot ever permit himself to be seen for what he truly is, cannot ever bear separation from his grandeur. Austin's thought, however, has gone too far, and too clearly; and when Channon spurns Austin promptly from him, they both know it is because Austin has mentally separated Channon from Channon's genius, and has discovered Channon as he is.

✓ In the slightness of this action, one might think, the novel is drawn rather fine, if not rather thin; yet perhaps there are things here to be weighed, if one will weigh them. It is true that the tale seems not only deficient in action, as we are used to the word, but undramatic in its persons. But if this be so, perhaps the sufficient reason lies in its very lyricism, its devotion to things which may be more ultimate than incident, which may create character; for example, the timeless events of the spirit, or the significant attitudes that truth takes. The persons of *The Region Cloud* may appear to be less persons than bright profound studies in personality; yet in spite of their lack of created independence it will not do to think they have no life. They live quite significantly in the final beauty of the finished scenes, the succession of lyric spectacles, to which they contribute abundantly and glowingly. In fact, while this novel does not possess or seek the detailed lifelikeness that one is accustomed to expect in fiction, it certainly has a spell of its own, which must turn out to be more than the spell of style, though style shares greatly in the achievement.

CHARLES K. TRUEBLOOD

DUTCH DAMOZELS

THE DUTCH LIBRARY. Vol. I: *Mary of Nimmegen. Translated from the Middle Dutch by Harry Morgan Ayres. With an introduction by Adriaan J. Barnouw. 78 pages.* Vol. II: *Lancelot of Denmark. Translated by Dr Geyl. 49 pages.* Vol. III: *Esmoreit. Translated by Harry Morgan Ayres. With an introduction by Adriaan J. Barnouw. 58 pages.* Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague. \$1 each volume.

TO make a thoroughly sound translation into English of a mediaeval play, it matters not of what language, is no easy task. Many of us to-day grow beyond belief weary at the first glimpse of the well-worn stock-in-trade archaic words that in English are supposed to be, and perhaps are, necessary for recreating the appropriate verbal atmosphere of the Middle Ages. Merely to catch a glimpse of a word like damozel is enough to set us nodding, so easy is it to remind us of the long hours of *ennui* that we associate with the name of William Morris and the attempt that he and his group made to reanimate "in soft raimant" a past that in its time, God wot, had little enough delicacy or unction about it.

Those who suffer under the illusion that the difficulties of such translating can be overcome by the free use of antiquated diction are as simple as the clergy who disfigure our towns with meretricious Gothic erections because, forsooth, they find it impossible to disconnect their conception of an appropriate place of worship from buildings put up in a sham fifteenth-century style and known as "church architecture."

Two out of the three little Dutch Plays that we are considering belong to a fourteenth-century miscellany called the *Halthem* manuscript and may be considered as examples of the romantic secular drama of that age; the third, *Mary of Nimmegen*, a more sturdy piece of work, was written at the end of the fifteenth century. It is this last play that holds our interest and deserves our attention. The author, an unknown Dutchman, writes in a broad racy style that has nothing of, what we might term, the romantic taint of the other two, and for this very reason offers little or no

temptation to Professor Ayres to display his knowledge of old English.

It is difficult to translate in flowery language when the manner and matter of the original is so essentially natural and realistic, and we therefore have in Professor Ayres' rendering of this particular drama a thoroughly satisfactory piece of work.

To read *Mary of Nimmegen* is to be reminded of the famous corn-field picture by the elder Breughel which hangs in The Metropolitan Museum of New York City. The same uncouth speech, the same gross acceptance of actuality is in evidence in this play as was, without doubt, favoured by those drunken farm-hands who loll and "lie reclined on the hills like Gods together" with their heavy codpiece bags shamelessly exposed, near the thick wall of uncut wheat, which, in its golden solidity, leaves the mind with such an unforgettable impression of *living* bread. Truly the particular savour of the old-world life of the Netherlands comes to us direct in Professor Ayres' translation as from the open door of some Jan Steen interior. The uncle sends his niece into the town to buy oil, salt, vinegar, and onions; condiments and victuals that it is difficult to imagine being even so much as mentioned in the two "romantic plays," any more than we would look to find such straight speaking as is indulged in by the aunt:

"Fy, niece, in the country Dickon or Will
Know well how to go with the lasses amids the rye."

Such utterances do not lend themselves to high-flown speech. Even in that most lovely and moving scene where Mary becomes "crop full of contrition" at seeing the mystery-play enacted on the "pageant-wain," a "hairy star" is mentioned as a suitable sign for the Almighty to place in the sky to impress with a sense of his omnipotence the sluggish imaginations of these honest Flemings. The theological argument, even, is charged with good flat-footed humour, as when the Creator, at a loss how to reason with the Holy Mother in reference to the difficulty he finds in dealing with mankind, says bluntly:

"But the worse they are plagued the worse they be."

The Play of Lancelot of Denmark, written probably a hundred years earlier, has nothing whatever broad-mouthed about it and has been admirably translated by Dr Geyl with the minimum of affectation. His simple method gives a simple delicacy to each passage. The lovely Sandareen, when her lover importunes her to go with him into a nearby wood, is made to answer in this exceedingly charming and provocative manner:

"I know on earth no man born
Whom I could so trust that I would
Go dally with him in the wood:
He would ever do his will with me."

Also when Reynald, Lancelot's chamberlain, speaks, long after his betrayal of her, of his master's true love, she answers, and it is an achievement on Dr Geyl's part to have preserved the simple words in their simple guise:

"I would not give for Lancelot's heart
A blade of grass the meadows grow."

The danger of Dr Geyl's method, however, may show itself to some critics in such lines as the following where the Knight is made to deplore his ill fortune in the hunting field in a rhymed doggerel almost worthy of the Ingoldsby Legends:

"And yet I shot not even a duck
I am ashamed of such bad luck."

In the last play, Esmoreit, translated by Professor Ayres, we have before us a striking example of the opposite method, of what in our impertinence, we may perhaps be permitted to call the Pre-Raphaelite method. The Play itself is a weak play, and the feeble plot does little to relieve the infinite lassitude that comes over us at the constant appearance of words like "Cedarn tree," "eke," "muchel," "meseemeth," and "methinketh."

I will give two quotations which should make it clear to the reader what the present reviewer is girding at:

"This I have perceived plain
 Sir Esmoreit be come again
 A fair, well-waxen youngling . . ."

or

"Come ye hither and look upon her
 Who, fulfilled of love and honour
 Hath to meward brought her heart . . ."

Incidentally the preposition "to" is surely superfluous even in this mock mediaeval verse. The Play ends with the fair "well-waxen youngling" hanging his cousin, the wicked Robert, and taking for his Queen the fair Damiette, who, as the "well-waxen youngling" put it, had come "meward" all the way from Damask.

It is extraordinary how necessary it seems to us in these "lonesome latter years" to get down, so to speak, to brass tacks, and how difficult it is for us to stomach anything but the most plain speech. With this reservation, however, we can feel, and do feel, nothing but gratitude to those who are responsible for bringing before the notice of the English reading public "A marvelous History of Mary of Nimmegen who for more than seven years lived and had ado with the Devil."

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THE NEGRO'S SONGS

ON THE TRAIL OF NEGRO FOLK-SONGS. By Dorothy Scarborough. 8vo. 289 pages. The Harvard University Press. \$3.50.

MELLOWS. By R. Emmet Kennedy. Large 8vo. 183 pages. Albert and Charles Boni. \$5.

THE BOOK OF AMERICAN NEGRO SPIRITUALS. Edited by James Weldon Johnson. Musical Arrangements by J. Rosamond Johnson and Lawrence Brown. 4to. 187 pages. The Viking Press. \$3.50.

WRITING about Dvorak's New World Symphony, Mr Philip Hale, the witty annotator of the Boston Symphony programmes, once asserted that the Negro "is not inherently musical," held that he founded his folk-songs on "sentimental ballads sung by the white women of the plantation or on camp-meeting tunes," "brought no primitive melodies with him from Africa," perverted the tunes he imitated, and that even if he had brought tunes from Africa, they could hardly, even after long usage, be called American folk-song. (I get all this from Mr Lawrence Gilman's recent notes on the programme of the Philadelphia Orchestra; "with a slight lapse from urbanity," says Mr Gilman, Mr Hale referred to the belief that "the future of American music rests on the use of Congo, North American Indian, Creole, Greaser and Cowboy ditties, whinings, yawps, and whoopings.")

All of this constitutes a rather controversial beginning for what ought to be only an essay in appreciation. But the dispute will not down. Mr Johnson, upholding the inspirational theory of the spirituals, suggests that the conversion to Christianity expressed itself in melody, and that those who deny the Negro's claim to his songs are like the Baconians; he does not, however, claim that the Negro brought African melodies to any great extent. It is universally agreed, I take it, that the purely African contribution is in rhythm, and on this, as on most points of technical in-

terest, the enthusiast need only go back to H. E. Krehbiel's essential book, *Afro-American Folk-Songs*. Many collectors of negro songs have discovered English ballad originals, for some spirituals, but not for all, or nearly all. Dr Scarborough notes a Scot parallel and this is especially interesting because, according to Krehbiel, the characteristic syncopation which we call negro occurs in certain Scottish reels.

The second point of controversy is not in the Shakespearean parallel, but in the Homeric. Were the Negro's songs composed, words and music, or words or music, by individuals, or are they group creations? A good individualist, Mr Mencken discards the group theory, admitting, no doubt, that the variations proceed from the work of choirs and congregations on the original material. Observers, again, record the seemingly spontaneous matching of line with line, the elaboration of songs from moment to moment.

Finally, and getting closer to the music itself, can the Negro's song become the American folk-song?

The American popular song, at this moment a significant part of American music, is composed almost entirely by the descendants of African Negroes and the descendants of Russian Jews. The Negro, accepting Christianity, discovered for himself the parallel between his own and the bondage of the Hebrews and among his most poignant songs are those drawn out of Exodus. If the Russian-Jewish-American composers were at all affected by the poetic themes of the Negro, the circle would be complete; but the typical American composer of this type attaches himself almost exclusively to the negro rhythm and, a little obviously, to his melody. The longing which in the spirituals is a yearning for Heaven and salvation is changed in American popular terms to a nostalgia for back-drop "Sunny South" and Mammy. The genuine and exceptional feeling of Irving Berlin, his sense of loneliness and separation, is intensely personal and seldom is associated with the theatrical scenery of the usual song writer; when he writes the usual song it is, to be sure, in the usual way, but in a score of songs from *When I Lost You*, to *Remember*, he finds the music which is definitely the Negro's most appropriate to his personal themes.

That the peasantry, and not the higher orders, create the national music (at least until it becomes an art) is assumed. But in Europe we think of a peasantry having history, prejudices, ways of living more or less in common with their social or financial or political

superiors. But even if you combine the Negro and the Jew, where are you to find the unbreakable bond between them and the Anglo-Saxon American, or even the American of mixed descent who has been here for generations? Can the Negro and the Jew stand in the relation of a folk to a nation? And if not, can the music they create be the national music?

There is this possibility: that as the American winds around himself layer after layer of civilization, he diminishes a little the vigour of his specific characteristics; and the immigrant, or the Negro, fresher in the country or in the country's freedom, acquires and retains the older qualities of mind and spirit. The hardy American as pioneer may give way to the Scandinavian and Slav who alone will be willing to struggle with loneliness and poverty in making arable land out of forest. The Italian may stick to his flask of Chianti after the American has given up the struggle for hard liquor. The Negro, certainly, holds to a pace and a rhythm different from these of our large cities; he still loafs, is carefree, avoids business a little, remains a trace more primitive in the expression of emotions not altogether foreign to the white man. Possibly, then, the outcast and the foreigner can apprehend certain spiritual truths about America.

That hypothesis would explain a little; would explain, for example, why bleary travelling salesmen find our sentimental ballads so exactly right for their emotions. But it would hardly explain the snap and surprise of current jazz. It is a rough generalization that the rhythm of jazz corresponds to the rhythm of our machinery. Krehbiel's celebrated notation of the rhythmic complexity in the drums of Dahomey and our recently acquired respect for other African art forms would lead us to caution; we cannot say that a simple civilization (the African) by accident hit upon the rhythm of a complex one (our own). If we can hazard that the African civilization preserved for us in their art was of a high order, and that ours is of an equal intensity, expressed in the complication of machinery, we can suspect a parallel which would make the suitability of African rhythms not at all surprising. We could then account for the dominance of the Russian-Jewish composer, in the use of this material, as the advantage of one who remains above the battle and holds fast, as those in the *mêlée* cannot, to his artistic impulses.

What we have in the negro songs, as collected above, as sung in

concert or on records, is a body of beautiful music. It has been neglected, distorted, made pretty, made tawdry, and now is being presented in various approaches to its native beauty. There is difficulty even in getting the original words; naturally the copying down of music which varies a little from singer to singer, and the efforts to harmonize suitably lead to differences of judgement. The Johnson collection may seem, in rare instances, to show traces of too much work, too much musicianship; but most of the songs as they are presented would not tempt the singer to be arty with the song. Mr Kennedy's arrangements are extremely simple and include several songs of which I have never heard, one especially attractive being *If You Can't Come, Send One Angel Down*; another noteworthy portion of his book is that devoted to the street cries of New Orleans, the vendors of buttermilk and potato-cake and blackberries, the chimney-sweep, and the charcoal man. I wonder that this work has not been done for our less picturesque cities; I have heard the cry of "strawberries" in Philadelphia in such strange musical intervals that after fifteen years I remember them; there are street cries in New York, quite apart from "watch your step" in the subway, and these too, I fancy, are available for the use of musicians.

Dr Scarborough's book has quantities of work songs (text and music in many cases) and is full of information. Texts alone were published last year by the press of the University of North Carolina and are noted in a recent issue of *THE DIAL*¹; the work songs tell us a great deal about the Negro, about his social aspirations, his everyday feelings, and about the rhythm in which he does his labours. They bristle with attractions to the psychologist and to the musician, and it is an easy guess that they will take the place, eventually, of *Swanee River* and *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*, as the raw material for American composers. In any case more and more of them are going to be available as the publishers of Mr Johnson's book have announced further compilations of negro songs, one volume of which will be devoted to these secular expressions.

I have omitted reference to the words of the negro songs, feeling that they are well enough known already. One thing, however, may be noted. Nearly everyone concerned with these songs feels the danger to which they are exposed by evil rendition. In general

¹ Cf. Briefer Mention, page 161. *THE DIAL*, February 1926.

two types meet with approval: the highly polished, genuinely artistic singing of Roland Hayes and the utterly simple singing of Paul Robeson. The middle ground is the danger zone, where the singer can prettify or patronize his songs. And the same thing is true even in reading the words; if we think of them always as quaint, if we separate the spirituals from their original intention, we lose entirely the sense of a great poetic impulse. We lose, too, the tremendous dramatic appeal of the songs:

"O, gambler, git up off o' yo' knees (*three times*)
End o' dat mornin', Good Lord (*twice*)
End o' dat mornin' when de Lord said to hurry."

The excitement in these songs, so often caused by the absence of the logical steps, by the looseness of construction which lets events run headlong into each other and changes the emotion even in the midst of a phrase, we can only get by a simple acceptance of the things as they stand.

And, possibly, when the present wave of enthusiasm subsides a little, we shall discover that these songs, like everything else brought to our shores, are part of the body of our arts, not the only possible source of our music, but one of inestimable value.

GILBERT SELDES

BRIEFER MENTION

GUY DE MAUPASSANT, ORIGINAL SHORT STORIES, translated from the French by Albert M. C. McMaster, B. A., A. E. Henderson, B. A., Mme Quesada, and others (16mo, 1505 pages; Walter J. Black: \$5.45). To hold in our hands, in so convenient a form, all Guy de Maupassant's short stories is a most fortunate privilege. What a master of his craft the great Frenchman was! "They hardly seem like literature at all, these blocks from the quarry of life, flung into one's face with an unerring aim." If anybody wishes to learn how to write short stories let him buy this admirable volume. He will derive from his expenditure far more profit than can be derived from any number of "Pitkin handbooks" or any number of "Courses in composition."

PASSION AND PAIN, by Stefan Zweig, translated from the German by Eden and Cedar Paul (12mo, 266 pages; Bernard G. Richards: \$2.50). The author, by adapting certain psycho-analytic theories, has been able to combine soul-delineation with the movement of plots. Upon some accidental, probably slight exterior event, there follows psychic trauma, or transference, or, in one case, "transfiguration"; and the individual exposed remains for years, perhaps for life, either a new character or some previous lost self. The stories do not equally persuade that even poignant incident has more weight than habit. However, in *The Governess*, the immaturity of the victims makes credible their capitulation to a single bitter fact; while in *The Runaway*, another story which sticks in the mind, the situation *per se* is sufficiently overwhelming. The translation is admirable; but no mere English can save these pages from appearing, to use words of the author, anything but "lyrically diffuse."

CLOSED ALL NIGHT, by Paul Morand (12mo, 203 pages; Seltzer: \$2). Impressions seem to come straight from the retina of Mr Morand's wide-awake eye onto the page before him without ever having been subjected to the troubling discipline of the intellect. He mounts from one sensation to the other much as the acrobat at a vaudeville performance steps up from table to table and from chair to chair while he builds a pyramid from which, to the consternation and nervous strain of the audience, he in the end dexterously and monstrosly falls. Though this Frenchman has cleverness without imagination, vigour without intensity, brilliancy without substance, he can still command our admiration by the very impudence of his unashamed versatility.

FUNEREALITIES, by Peggy Bacon (4to, 59 pages; Aldergate Press: \$10). Miss Bacon is a wit. Her style is quaint and altogether pleasing, both as versifier and artist. The ironic little poems are greatly fortified by the mocking drawings which appear to have been lightly tossed off but will not be lightly tossed away by those who relish fantasy mixed with fun. To such the book will be a guarded treasure.

GREEK COINS, Poems and Memorabilia, by George Cram Cook (10mo, 142 pages; Doran: \$1.75) is a collection of poems which are "the fragmentary memorials of an extraordinary and memorable man," extraordinary and memorable as is apparent even without the engaging and corroborating testimony of Floyd Dell, Edna Kenton, and Susan Glaspell, which has been prefixed to the volume. The founder of The Provincetown Players is in these improvisations and unassuming monologues unique, groping with singular stubbornness for a vision which was so clear as to make him despise the comfort of half measures. George Cram Cook's poems, like his voyage to Greece, are symbols wherein we may read one man's quest for the perfection of beauty.

EPISODES AND EPISTLES, by W. L. (8vo, 80 pages; Seltzer: \$1.75). Despite seeming unceremony and certain distractingly far from established technical novelties which sometimes resound rightly from another lyre, one finds among these graphic poems—urban, suburban, sentimental, and descriptive—a sure, delightful rhythm, a thought, a feeling, a phase of experience, to which one cannot be indifferent.

LETTERS TO A LADY IN THE COUNTRY, TOGETHER WITH HER REPLIES, edited by Stuart P. Sherman (12mo, 232 pages; Scribner: \$2). This is an interchange of adept, though somewhat academic pleasantries between Kentucky Paul in Manhattan, and Manhattan Caroline in Kentucky. With the flow of days and weeks the pleasantness heightens in amiability, for, as we are made early to infer, they are but young, charming, and contemporary in spirit. And while one need not read closely to observe in the expressions of Paul and Caroline an identical dexterity, a same wily marksmanship, as of the prepared *littérateur*, this does not empty the two points of view of their plausibility, nor subtract much from the sprightliness of the by-play.

IN THE AMERICAN GRAIN, by William Carlos Williams (10mo, 235 pages; A. & C. Boni: \$3). Appraising in the name of beauty, Montezuma, Christopher Columbus, Ponce de Leon, Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, Edgar Allen Poe, Aaron Burr, and others, Dr Williams finds in these separate studies, interrelated proof of American aesthetic deprivedness, or is it depravity? "Morals are deformed in the name of PURITY;" he says, "till, in the confusion, almost nothing remains of the great American New World but a memory of the Indian." Unsubmissive to his pessimism and sometimes shocked by the short work which he makes of decorum, verbal and other, we wisely salute the here assembled phosphorescent findings of a search prosecuted "with antennae extended." In The Discovery of the West Indies and in The Destruction of Tenochtitlan, in the giltheads, parrots, lizards, and wandlike naked people of the one, as in the eloquent minutiae of the other, we recognize a superbly poetic *orificeria* of meaning and of material—in the idols, the jasper, the birds of prey, the "lions and other animals of the cat kind," the wrought stone and wrought leather, the silver, the gold, and the courtyard "paved with handsome flags in the style of a chessboard."

SILHOUETTES, by Sir Edmund Gosse (12mo, 413 pages; Scribner: \$2.75) consists of numerous short essays on books, reprinted from *The London Sunday Times*. Ranging a large field, from Dr Bernard Mandeville to Louise Imogen Guiney, and from St John of the Cross to George Moore, they bear graceful witness to the scholarship and taste for which their author is well known. In them, in fact, we may see exercised a cultivated pertinence, and a correctitude very elaborate and deliberate, but so thoroughly mastered that it appears quite easy and impromptu.

ISRAEL, by Ludwig Lewisohn (8vo, 280 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$3) is at once an analysis of the present status of the Jew throughout the world, a vigorous criticism of the theory of assimilation, an engaging study of the rebirth of Jewish life in Palestine, and an attempt to formulate a programme for a scattered people. Mr Lewisohn has nowhere written more lucidly, or with finer critical acumen. Writing of prophets, at least the shadow of the mantle of the prophet has fallen upon him. His book is the strongest evidence of his contention that only in the spirit of Israel can the Jew create.

RUSSIA, by Valentine O'Hara and N. Makeef (8vo, 346 pages; Scribner: \$3) offers a brief summary of the history of this country—its sources and origins, the latest manoeuvrings of the Soviet government, and the aftermath of the New Economic Policy. Notwithstanding their marked inability to grasp the higher significance of the Bolshevik revolution as symbol of historic mutation rather than as a record of the intrigues of individuals, the authors have rendered a competent handbook on the old Russia and the new United Soviet Socialist Republics.

THE WORLD COURT, by Antonio S. de Bustamante, translated by Elizabeth F. Read (12mo, 378 pages; Macmillan: \$3). Although abundantly rewarding effort, this book is as likely to be read through by the layman, as *Blackstone* is. All questions that could be asked concerning the great tribunal established in accordance with the directions of Article 14 of the Versailles treaty, are here answered by an expert. Antonio de Bustamante, a judge of the World Court, and member of The American Institute of International Law, has written a memorable and authoritative book—enhanced by grace of diction. There is little doubt that its purpose is to bring America to see the advantages of acknowledging and of using the Court, a privilege which could be enjoyed without our becoming necessarily a member of the League of Nations.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM, by A. S. Sachs (16mo, 201 pages; The Rand School: \$1.50) is a restatement of Marxian economics whose chief distinction rests in its loyalty to the master. Mr Sachs writes earnestly, but lacks the precision and the muscle which would make his volume something more than a serviceable text-book. "Tens and hundreds of thousands of workers are concentrated in gigantic factories, mills, and mines for the production and manufacture of . . . necessary commodities," says Mr Sachs; and there are many similar delays.

THE THEATRE

THE sophisticated New Yorker in its three-line theatre guide to **THE DYBBUK** uses both "wondrous" and "beauteous," so you will judge that something out of the ordinary is taking place at the Neighborhood Playhouse. Life's guide says "impressive," and I do not recall in my time such a unanimity of excitement in praise of a play in many a year (in dispraise I recall the same unanimity and the same excitement quite well).

I have noted, before, the occasional mania, or group excitement, which comes over New York's critics; in the present instance I sincerely wish I could partake of it. Nothing pleases me less than to find myself insensible to a beauty, a charm, a power so acclaimed by critics, among them those whose judgement I admire. Discounting hysteria, I went to the theatre with more serious hopes of finding something strange and good than I had had since I went to see **THE GOLD RUSH**. And to me the production of **THE DYBBUK** is not only a disappointment, it is in many ways an actively bad piece of work.

I have wondered often why the producers of Shaw do not take the trouble to read what Shaw has to say about his work; but what can you do when producers will apparently not read what they themselves place on their programmes? "**THE DYBBUK**," says Ansky, the author, "is a realistic play about mystical people." Is that direct, simple, decisive enough? Is it specific enough to stop any one from making it into a mystical play about unreal people? The people in **THE DYBBUK** are of the heterodox sect of Chassidim among the Russian Jews; the intensity, the exaltation of their religious fervour marked them, set them apart from the other Jews to whom Judaism remained a moral code and a normal background to everyday life. The story is of a young student, searching for ways not sanctioned by the Talmud of comprehending the world, dying, and taking possession of the soul of the girl who should have been his, but was denied him by her father. The spirit which possesses the girl prevents her marriage to another; when it is exorcized, she dies.

Obviously if this play were to be anything more than quaint

only one thing could not be spared: the sense of the reality of belief in the people themselves. They might be queer in their customs, odd in their dress, strange in speech; but an inner simplicity had to go with the sanctity and the fervour of their faith. For the play is not altogether a study in morbid psychology; it is as much a study of Jewish common life, thrown into high relief by the demon. And so long as the sense of reality was missing, so long as its place was taken only by a sense of art, the effectiveness of the play was marred. A witch on Walpurgis-night is a natural phenomenon; it is only in Salem that a witch is impressive.

It will be said that Mr Vardi, who helped in the direction of the play, was associated with the Habima in Moscow and may be credited with knowing the tradition of *THE DYBBUK* and the mind of the play's author. This would mean, in effect, that the production had to be stylized in order to be effective at all; possibly—stylized, but not mannered. It was the calculated mannerism of the production which ruined it for me, not its general style. In a style it is reasonable that every character shall have a rhythmic gait, rather than a simple walk; shall create specific lines, in a specific sequence, instead of merely gesticulating; shall chant or intone, instead of talking. But all of these things have to be related to a definite conception of the play and, which may be more important, have to be perfectly done. If they come off tardily or partially, they lose all; they descend to mannerism. In this case not the mannerism, the trick of style, of any particular player; the mannerism of the producer.

It seemed to me that hardly anything except the handling of the crowd in the second act came off at all. All the bearded Jews posing in awkward positions were so consciously Chagall; all the movements were so specifically Moscow Art Theatre NIGHT'S LODGING; all the changes in voice were so operatic; all the gestures so intentionally made pictures. At bottom no one believed in the legend; the mistake was made which Jules Lemaitre once complained about to Pierre Loti: these people were being treated as if they were exotics. But to themselves they were distinctly not exotics, to themselves they were not even mystical. They were natural, they were commonplace. A dybbuk, a soul possessed, was something strange and horrible and utmost anathema and the sacred name had to be invoked to get rid of it; whereas in the play we

saw, it seemed as if everybody was from the first moment getting ready for the dybbuk, as if the dybbuk were the natural thing and not the people whom he spared. It may have been unity of tone; but it sacrificed the whole illusion of the theatre.

I think that the thoroughness of the production, of mannerism, fooled the critics and obviously fools the audience. Especially those unfamiliar with Jewish life feel that every accent is correct, and some of them have suggested that they are afraid they are not getting all of the legendry and of the racial background of the play. I fear they are getting far too much; although I have no special knowledge of the Chassidim, everything I have seen in the common Jewish theatre and read of Jewish life in Russia leads me to this belief. There is, to be sure, no reason why an outsider should not get the fairer impression; in fact, when dealing with material foreign to us it is the duty of the producer to create a world sustained by its own logic, regardless of our special knowledge or ignorance. What I complain of is that the world so created in *THE DYBBUK* was, in essence, the world of the artistic theatre, approaching the arty.

I revert to the printed programme and find one further item which seems to bear out my contention. The one not-realistic character, according to the author, is the messenger—obviously a character interpolated to point the underlying mysticism in the acts following the death of the student. And this character was acted, by Ian Maclaren, with almost complete realism. The play was, then, inverted. Had it been able to stand on its head—or, simply, had the production burned with an inner fire, even if fed on other materials than the author intended—it would have cleared its way. But it only flickered. Mr Albert Carroll and Miss Mary Ellis at times nearly blew the flame out entirely.

About another current enthusiasm I feel a deal better. *YOUNG WOODLEY* is a play far above the average in interest. The audiences have been reproached for not recognizing that this study in adolescence is not precisely by Booth Tarkington; but I can hardly blame them entirely. Even in Tarkington, Glenn Hunter was not so funny as moving; but the audiences were told to laugh, and at certain poignant moments in the present play, Mr Hunter fails to prevent them from laughing. It is a law of the theatre

that a man with a tea-cup and a plate is to be laughed at; so they laughed. And there are strange lapses into trivial lines and situations in a play which generally holds to its own speech and rhythm. Except for moments Mr Hunter's work is really extraordinary.

There will be current, at about the time this journal appears, an International Theatre Exposition in New York. Although I have been associated with the enterprise in a minor capacity, I feel it no lapse of decorum to suggest that the exposition will be worth seeing. It proposes to bring together examples of the best work done in the theatre during the past twenty years, without regard to schools and movements, but naturally emphasizing to an extent the novelty of constructivism which lends itself particularly to an exhibition of models. Readers who have seen *LYSISTRATA* and the superb *CARMENCITA* of the Moscow Art Theatre Musical Studio will be aware of the new scope the director of a play achieves when his settings are built logically and solidly on the stage, "in accordance with the logic of the materials," as Mr Huntly Carter says. These are only the beginnings of constructivism as the experimentalists practise it in Russia and Germany.

The settings and designs should have some æsthetic interest in themselves, but for those who care for the theatre there will be another interest—in speculating as to the outcome of these feats of engineering on the theatre as a whole, on the actor, and the playwright. Tairoff, in the Kamerny Theatre, considers a play as raw material and prefers to take plays of the classic or neo-classic type, feeling freer to handle them than he might be with a contemporary work. To him it is not a play to produce, nor is the actor a person to act; they and everything else are combined to create a new unity.

Obviously the most appreciable result, after one weighs the whole theatre so conceived, is the elimination of the star-actor, and I suspect that if we could be assured of this consequence, most of us would accept the new scheme without a murmur. It tends, at times, to the dwarfing of the play, and the fury of the French reactionaries when a modernistic *PHÈDRE* was produced by the Russians in Paris is something to be remembered. The system makes such requirements on the director as few of our own directors can meet; it makes requirements on the audiences also.

The purely mechanical theatre—which disallows the actor entirely—is a novelty, even in theory; but interesting. I fancy that thoughtful Americans will discover in the more moderate constructivism a tendency to use the triumphs of mechanism as the materials for art. And they may ask themselves whether this isn't another, and possibly a better, way of mastering the machine. Better than merely perfecting the instrument, which may lead us, as we approach perfection, to a more abject dependence upon the machine, a slavery to it. If we can do what the Europeans can do, use our machine as material for art, perhaps we shall arrive at something approaching mastery.

Unexpectedly I am compelled, with this chronicle, to give up my observation of the local theatre for a few months. With the permission of the editors I shall however continue to speculate a little on its problems.

GILBERT SELDES

MODERN ART

THE Quinn Collection, at this writing, is still the topic *du jour*. In a case of general interest, such as this, the newspapers may be relied upon to publish the cold facts to the world and so it scarcely can be regarded now as news to state that the cold facts are that finally it was decided to place the selling in the hands of Joseph Brummer, one of our most able dealers, and to exhibit certain chosen pieces in the galleries of the Art Center by way of a memorial to the late owner.

These, I consider, are exceedingly cold facts, for the procedure resolves the Quinn Collection into money and nothing else. It leaves the modern art situation in America precisely where it was and Mr Quinn might just as well have dabbled in stocks or dry-goods as in art. A public auction, on the other hand, would have been a magnificent gesture, compelling professional attention, and awakening the public conscience as nothing else that can be thought of. It would have been as much of an eye-opener as the celebrated Mary J. Morgan sale of years ago which first taught the American public what a peachbloom vase was, only this time the lessons would have concerned themselves with Henri Rousseau, Picasso, and Derain. Since Europe has been so quick to buy examples of these men—the pick of the collection, it is said, having been made by a Parisian dealer—it is absurd to contend that Europe would not have competed in the auction; but had that event occurred, you may be sure those connoisseurs would have had competition from unexpected sources. It is a discouraging thought that I have harboured for a long time that it takes a dramatic occasion to fix the eye of our lethargic *noblesse*; and to realize that we have missed our great educational chance in the Quinn affair is doubly tragic for nowhere on the horizon is there another collection that could do so effectually the job. It is part of the immense advantage that Paris has, and which I continually resent, that there, periodically, the Hôtel Druot clears the air. The Quinn Collection contained many sure-fire hits but much also that was debatable, and a public instead of a private appraisal of it would have been a great help.

It is the part of philosophy to accept what benefits accrue even

from mishaps, so it is time to acknowledge that the portion of the Quinn Collection that was shown had all the old electrifying powers and drew a steady attendance of the "best people" who made valiant efforts "to understand." No doubt some of them succeeded. An immense amount of water has passed beneath the Brooklyn Bridge since the days of the Armory Show when aspiring amateurs shocked by such aspects of modern life as they caught from the mirrors being held aloft by the new painters could think of nothing better to shriek than the words "degenerate" and "impotence." The attitude now is certainly calmer, though here and there an unregenerate still thinks it necessary to insult an artist for being truthful. I have, for instance, just finished reading a rather dull satire by Mr Hilaire Belloc who attempts to burlesque the modern frenzy for quick finance and tells of a lady who made a dubious *coup* on the Stock Exchange and was thereby enabled to repaper her Georgian house and hang her drawing-room with pictures painted apparently "by lunatics in hell." This is the only witty phrase, I hasten to say, in a book I have no desire to recommend. Mr Belloc spends all his energy in contriving a picture of modern society that any visitor from Mars would consider hellish, but turns in a fury to rend the artists who are saying the same thing he does. The wonderful difference between the two points of view is simply that Mr Belloc looks on life with scorn and our painters with sympathy.

My finest moment in Mr Quinn's *Inferno*—for I don't care what Mr Belloc calls it, modern life is the only life I have known and the only kind I enjoy—came with the discovery of his amazing Henri Rousseau, *La Bohémienne Endormie*. This certainly must be one of the great imaginative pictures of the era. How explain it, how measure its peculiarly psychic force? Luckily there are no vulgar chemicals to rob it of its secret, which will mystify, I hope, for many years to come. Like music it may be interpreted variously and all interpretations shall be correct. Is it a dream more terrible than a real one? Is it a dream gypsy sleeping in a desert that never was? You can take your choice but in either choice there is the same stab at your vitals or you are not susceptible to poetry. I am always quoting Emily Dickinson's definition of poetry but it has not yet staled in repetition: "If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I

know that is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry. These are the only ways I know it. Is there any other way?" . . . In this picture, as in most works that seem struck straight from the soul without any intermediary parleyings with the intellect, I am thrilled again by such details as the moon and stars which shimmer fatefully but positively as they never do in the night-scenes of the so-called realists. This *Bohémienne*, I understand, is part of the immense loot from the Quinn Collection that Mr Rosenberg is taking back to Paris, but the circumstance to me is not sad. I am resigned, also, to the departure of Seurat's *Cirque*. In fact, I am more and more persuaded, as time goes on, that the correct lodging for a masterpiece is the country that produced it.

Not, however, being anywhere near the period when exact justice is administered or even understood, I find myself in a position to register the arrival in this land of another group of French masterpieces, a group that will go far in assuaging the grief occasioned by our divorce from the Quinn Picassos, Derains, Matisses, et cetera. This is the superb collection of Maillol sculptures belonging to Mr A. C. Goodyear, of Buffalo. This includes the gilt bronze *Torso of a Young Woman* that has been worked over by the sculptor until every inch of the thing has a vibrant quality of its own, the armless figure called *Summer*, the relief, *Désir*; and fifteen other torsos and reclining figures, all bafflingly beautiful. Here at last is an art that confidently challenges the antique. The highest standard is usually attached to slenderly athletic types and it is usual to consider it a drop in taste when the cult for the overly muscular comes in. Maillol is certainly not ascetic but neither does he seek Amazons. His ideal woman is simply capable, free to meet on equal terms all the demands of nature. Mr Augustus John calls her "fecund." So she is, among other things. Chiefly, to Maillol, she is something magnificently alive. It is a never-ending surprise to feel the possibilities in movement that his figures possess. But of course the chief surprise of all is the fact that such un-nervous ideals were realized in the middle of the Speed Age. Has Mr Hilaire Belloc, do you suppose, ever seen a Maillol?

HENRY MCBRIDE

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

THE day was shod with bronze. A period of positiveness had come again, kneading the landscape to robust dignity and weight. Solidity and lightness informed the quivering mass within, greeting extended shapes and lines and growths as friendliest partners. Firmly the invisible Kurwenal chanted "*im echten Land, im Heimatland, auf eig'ner Weid und Wonne, im Schein der alten Sonne.*" Feeling of all genuine things across the times was clear: Bach making his dense gilded music in spiritual vigour; peasants and "little kids" sporting in abandon and co-ordinate joy; strength and fecundity of rough earth letting sharp teeth bite into the real. Gleaming snowpeaks of Alps hovered near as clouds. In the pure hay-valley, thick soles were beating the ground in dance, and the cool Swiss beer foamed high. Yes, the simplest, most positive material. No spicing, no sensationalism. The decision that dares allow pressure in the biceps and resolution in the grit of jaws. And serenity floated aloft above all personal "I," prestige, and failure. So much alone with earth and her grief and graves! So much upon her wide and corn-sweet breast! So much apart from her, too, in regions where pure form plays free in its own air, and fugues end *à la chinoise* if they will! And still, so much with ribald mankind everywhere. *Alors, arrivait un vieux paysan, ivre, qui chantait comment, autrefois sur la montagne, il avait baisé une jeune fille.*

In this robustious mood, the meaning of Bloch's Concerto Grosso seems to lie. The short archaïcizing work for string orchestra with piano *obligato* is positive, rich weighted music simple in substance, muscularly rhythméd and net of outline, and impersonally grave and impersonally breezy. Thrust from within the foursquare little movements march. Prime music, the small suite is not. Its line was not born of sharpest sensation, nor did a great emotional charge deliver the form. Bloch's vigour and vehement convulsive stroke shape every bar, and alternately contract and amplify the lightly modernized, eighteenth-century mould; yet the idiom is never arrestingly fresh. Many of the ideas, round as they are and magistroally put to use, appear either slight and undistinguished

variations of certain in Bloch's earlier more Hebraic works, or of little intrinsic significance. The material of the *Pastorale* and *Rustic Dances* is deliberately popular, of course; the entire scheme is remarkably simple and conservative; Bloch has chosen to abide within long-established limits of harmony and uses shrill, piercing, and "dissonant" effects with extreme reserve; but all one can say for the material itself is that it is generally better in quality than Strauss's. The chords, built of fourths and fifths, which close the broad third movement, like some elsewhere employed by Bloch, recall Puccini.

Within these bounds, the *Concerto* grandly satisfies. Bloch's power and control impose afresh at each encounter; not only for the reason we are unused to finding construction and cumulative forms equal to his in the music of the day. Bloch's capacity for developing and sustaining his ideas is second to no composer's since Beethoven. Dignity and weight enter what he touches. His music moves on firmest legs. The new piece seems to show the forceful modern observing the diddling of others with eighteenth-century forms, fugues and pastorales, and archaic turns of style, and then rolling up his sleeve-linen and saying "Since they insist on classicizing . . ." setting about the business thoroughly. Each of the lusty movements: prelude, dirge, *pastorale*, and fugue, is conducted by an impulse flowing unbroken to culmination. A light and iron hand controls the rich mass of string and piano sound, summoning soft thunders of precisely cut sonority. So rich, so golden was the sound that one spied to see whether M Koussevitzky (the sole modern music society now operating in New York) had not concealed a horn in the forest of strings. Here, in the desert of the recent, was earth to stand on, a house to repose in, a loaf to eat. Novelties had teemed all month. With the exception of Bartók's *Dance Suite*, none had new life. The Italians contributed musical equivalents of the Victor Emanuel monument in Rome. Bloch's work alone stirred the depths, and bronzed the day. Necessity remains the parent of invention.

PAUL ROSENFELD

COMMENT

I am sure there is a common Spirit that plays within us, yet makes no part of us.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

THE brittle, brilliant character of life to-day is varyingly exsposed. Speed and sport are, it would seem, indigenous to this country. We have the canoe, but ignore the punt and one could inspect the craft belonging to any American yacht-club without finding as a name, the continentally approved *Pas Pressé*. We are accustomed in America to admitting that "the prosperous, good-looking, domineering woman is a very attractive being." Our most presentable young people seem to share in the attitude of haste, and are accused of irreverence, ingratitude, and flippancy. We are, however, encouraged to suspect beneath the mannerism of quick self-sufficiency, a root of seriousness. In a recent book, *The Religion of Undergraduates*,¹ opinions are revealed which have been expressed in private conclave and in answer to questionnaires. In apparent contrast with the insobriety of the present day, these opinions involving moral issues, could not, one suspects, have been heard on the campus or in undergraduate meetings during the early days of American colleges, despite the recorded circumspect bearing of those times. In few novels is the "mystical," the "mediaevally intense" atmosphere of the university, so prepossessingly and so exactly suggested as incidentally in these impressions of "the silent quadrangle suddenly filled with color and purposeful movement resembling some sedate folk-dance of processional figures on the green." No subjects of enquiry seem more living than those skeletons and scientific queries brought forth by students in unembarrassed freedom of discussion: Is there a truly desirable profession? In how far has one responsibility for others? What place has sex in one's life? What is immortality?

¹ *The Religion of Undergraduates*. By Cyril Harris. 12mo. 87 pages. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.25.

"We, it seems, are critical," says Emerson in *The American Scholar*. "We cannot enjoy anything for hankering to know whereof the pleasure consists; we are lined with eyes; we see with our feet; the time is infected with Hamlet's unhappiness."

Prompted by those perennial "two selves, one actual; the other, ideal," various questions are asked: "Is one's conduct ethical because good ethics have been found to be good for the race and because one has the habit?" "How good must one be to be good?" "What am I?" "I seem to be at war with myself. Two forces fight for possession of me. Sometimes I take sides with one, sometimes with the other. More often I merely look on." "I feel a sort of cheerless pity for myself. I am an animal, not a brain or a soul." These not complacent statements and enquiries point to the fact that there is in an age of lightness, a desire for the essential—that "the unstable estimates of men crowd to him whose mind is filled with a truth, as the heaped waves of the Atlantic follow the moon." It would seem that "in an age of wonders" there is "room for wonder." One is pleased to maintain an illusion of the university as "a grove of everbearing trees," and recalls, not in irony, a much read non-academic student's concept of the undergraduate as a Myron's Discobolus descending marble steps between ivory pillars.

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